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ARCHANT KOS MEDIA Mid North Kent edition IT'S WHAT SUNDAYS ARE ALL ABOUT No.440 February 27, 2011

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'SHOCKING' £3.8 MILLION PAID OUT – AND THERE'S MORE TO COME

Spiralling cost of KCC's redundancy payments

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
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GOLDEN handshakes and redundancy payments have cost Kent County Council £3.8 million in less than a year.

The authority paid out £3.3m to just 213 ex-workers between April 1, 2010, and January 31, 2011, and will soon lose a further £538,263 with the departure of nine more senior managers.

The startling figure is not far off the £5m spent from the same budget in the previous three years combined, and serves as a warning to taxpayers ahead of an expected 1,500 job losses at KCC over the next three to four years.

"It's an incredible amount to be spending on redundancies when we should be focusing on trying to redeploy staff," said Liberal Democrat councillor Tim Prater, a member of the KCC's governance and audit committee.

"It strikes me as being a lot of money spent in less than a year and quite a percentage of the available budget. I know they're trying to reduce numbers of staff, but we've been told all the way through that most would go through natural wastage and redeployment.

"So for a year when the council has not been massively focused on redundancies it's a fairly shocking statistic."

The £3.8m can be broken into three separate numbers, including £2.5m paid to 195 council workers – not including those employed in schools – in redundancy payments since last April. According to KCC, much of this reflects the implementation of proposals agreed in 2009 to restructure both the adult social serv-

Continued on page two


Picture: KMG

GURKHAS' ROYAL WELCOME

For full story see inside

Life with Gaddafi

AS THE anti-government uprising continues in Libya, a Kent resident recalls her own experience of life under Muammar Gaddafi's rule.

Mother-of-three Rosemary Tennent, from Canterbury, lived in the north African country for two years during the 1980s and says there was a "stranglehold of fear" even then.

Opponents are battling to end Colonel Gaddafi's 40-year rule amid accusations of repression and genocide.

FULL STORY – PAGE 3

Catching the chill

A DECLINE in visitor numbers at some of Kent's top tourist attractions has been blamed on last year's miserable weather.

Sissinghurst Castle fared among the worst with a 21 per cent drop, but Dover Castle recorded a 15 per cent rise.

Visit Kent's Sandra Matthews-Marsh said: "Outdoor venues and gardens were particularly badly hit by wet Bank Holiday weekends."

FULL STORY – PAGE 18

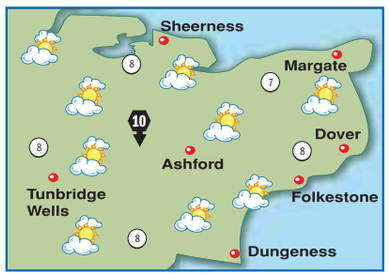
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Kent today



TODAY: It will be bright with some sunshine, but there will be the risk of a few showers for a time. Feeling rather chilly in the brisk northerly wind. Max temp 7-10C (45-50F). **TONIGHT:** Dry with clear spells and variable amounts of cloud. A touch of ground frost is possible. Min temp 0-3C (32-37F).

Around Britain

		°C	°F			°C	°F
Aberdeen	fair	9	48	London	fair	10	50
Belfast	fair	9	48	Liverpool	fair	9	48
Birmingham	fair	9	48	Manchester	fair	9	48
B'mouth	fair	11	52	Newcastle	sun	9	48
Bristol	sun	9	48	Norwich	fair	8	46
Cardiff	fair	10	50	Oxford	sun	10	50
Cork	fair	9	48	Southsea	fair	10	50
Edinburgh	fair	9	48	S'hampton	fair	10	50
Glasgow	fair	9	48	Southport	sun	8	46
Isle of Man	fair	8	46	Swansea	sun	9	48
Leeds	fair	9	48	Torquay	sun	10	50

Sun & moon

Sunrise	6.46am	Sunset	5.31pm	Lighting up times:
Moonrise	3.59am	Moonset	11.57am	5.31pm to 6.44am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)		ht (m)	
Dover	06.18	5.3	19.05	5.3	07.54	5.4	20.26	5.5
Margate	07.15	4.0	19.48	3.9	08.42	4.0	21.14	4.0
St Mary's	–	–	12.37	4.2	01.18	4.4	14.00	4.3

Week ahead

monday A little sun. max 9C min0C

tuesday Dry and fine. max 8C min -2C

wednesday Dry and bright. max 8C min 1C

thursday Isolated showers. max 8C min 1C

friday Wintry showers. max 7C min 0C

saturday Isolated showers. max 7C min 0C

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KCC chief Carter blasts Coalition for building 'red tape'

COUNTY council leader Paul Carter has criticised the Coalition Government for not doing enough to tackle bureaucracy in the building industry.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
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Cllr Carter, who also runs property, construction and retail businesses in central London, says local planning authorities will struggle to achieve affordable housing targets while the firms they rely on continue to be tied up in red tape.

Cllr Carter voiced his frustration to KoS after delivering a speech at a housing conference hosted by the South East England Councils group, of which he is chairman.

"I don't think the Government has got out of the starting blocks yet," he said. "I've been building things in London for 30 years now, and at the beginning all I needed were two pieces of paper. Now I need about 25 due to all the compliance and regulation.

"Getting a development off the ground in England costs 25 per cent more than it does in mainland Europe because of all the bureaucracy and it's absolute madness.

"People need cheaper homes and all we're doing is adding to the cost of building them. There is an army of people whose job it is to make builders' lives miserable and make them not want to build anything.

"Why not get building inspectors to oversee the construction work all the way through? They are very strict and stringent and I hold them in very high regard because they do a very good job. We don't need a whole raft of private sector bodies on top of that."

As part of the Localism Bill now going through Parliament, councils will be given more power to decide housing targets.

This is partly because the Coalition has opted to scrap Regional Spatial Strategies including the South East Plan. Residents will also be given the power to instigate referendums on any local issue, as well as the power to veto excessive council tax increases.

In addition the Government is planning to introduce the New Homes Bonus scheme, which will result in councils earning cash incentives for every home built. But Cllr Carter said it was important the reality of the Localism Bill ends up matching the rhetoric.

He added: "There are clearly opportunities for local authorities, but the balance is too much towards challenges rather than cutting red tape and giving us genuine flexibility to lead, innovate and meet local needs.

"We welcome the idea of incentives such as the New Homes Bonus, but the details need refining to make sure the system is fair, accountable and something that will encourage communities to take on new building.

"I'm not saying we should go back to the figures being suggested in the South East Plan, but if we can build two-thirds of those numbers then we'll be doing very well."

News and sport updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk

Redundancy is costing county

continued from front page

ices and children, families and education departments. The council also paid £784,012 in end-of-contract payments to 18 other people, including £408,000, before tax, to former chief executive Peter Gilroy.

The final nine senior managers are all leaving as a result of the authority's ongoing restructure, which it says will eventually deliver £20m of savings.

Emma Boon, of the Taxpayers' Alliance, said: "Some redundancy payments will be unavoidable and departing staff should get what they're legally entitled to, but too many of these deals are over generous.

"Too many deals are signed behind closed doors, with taxpayers having no say and often finding out too late. With KCC needing to find millions in savings, these expensive goodbyes must be curbed."

Last week, the council signed off its budget for the coming year, during which time it will be forced to find £95m of savings, followed by £65m in 2012/13.

Services are expected to be hit hard as a result, with the authority already confirming plans to increase social care charges, slash £2.6m funding for children's centres, and double the price of the Freedom Pass travel scheme from £50 to £100. It must also cut the number of staff positions by up to 1,500 over the next three to four years.

Cllr Roger Gough, cabinet member for corporate support services and performance management, said the council employs about 14,000 non-school staff.

He added: "While redundancies do incur a one-off cost, they then bring recurring savings to the taxpayer year after year.

"Like any local authority or major organisation, we have funds set aside to deal with redundancy and end-of-contract payments, which are an unavoidable part of managing a workforce of this size, particularly during periods of major restructure.

"The payments in question represent less than half a per cent of our total salary budget over the last three years."

Enjoy a taste of the Garden of England

A RANGE of crisps capturing the essence – and flavours – of Kent will be launched this week. Kent Crisps, made from locally-grown potatoes, feature a range of classic flavours with a local twist.

They include a first for the crisps industry – an oyster and vinegar flavour – to celebrate Whitstable's most famous delicacy.

Others include sea salt and Biddenden Cider vinegar, sea salt, and Ashmore cheese and onion. Ashmore cheese is made by the Cheesemakers of Canterbury and Biddenden Cider vinegar is a product of the county's oldest trading vineyard. Sea salt is in recognition of Kent's long coastline.

The initial range offers 40g packets which go on sale from more than 60 farm shops, delis, and independent food specialists across Kent. Plans for further outlets include pubs, hotels and visitor attractions in the South East. Quex Foods, a division of the Quex Park Estate in Bichington, Thanet, is behind the new hand-cooked crisps.



Anthony Curwen, Quex Foods' managing director, said: "We have selected flavours that celebrate Kent produce and tastes associated with the county. In addition, our packets show imagery of the county's heritage.

"Other flavours are planned and we hope the people of Kent, its visitors and those from further afield who appreciate the Garden of England will enjoy them."

All the potatoes used will have been harvested from fields surrounded Quex Park.

Mr Curwen added: "The response we've had so far from people who have tried them has been amazing. The oyster and vinegar flavour has been singled out as being very different from anything available."

Quex Foods also makes a range of local produce, including extra virgin rapeseed oil, and extra virgin sunflower oil – both grown and pressed on its local farm.



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Eagles to fly in for festival

ROCK legends The Eagles have been confirmed as this year's first headline act for the annual Hop Farm Festival in Paddock Wood.

The band, best known for their 1976 multi-million selling Hotel California album, will headline the Friday night of the two-day event in July.

They will follow in the footsteps of Bob Dylan, who was the big draw at last year's festival, and the likes of Neil Young and Paul Weller in previous years.

After months of speculation, it was confirmed on Monday that The Eagles would headline, with support on the Friday coming from former Roxy Music frontman Bryan Ferry, The Killers' lead singer Brandon Flowers, Cab for Cutie and 10cc.

The Saturday headliner will be confirmed over the coming days.

The two-day festival will take place on Friday, July 1, and Saturday, July 2.

Securing The Eagles, who have a number of European shows scheduled for this summer, will be a major boost to festival organisers.

It will also see a huge benefit to the local economy, with tens of thousands set to descend on the Hop Farm site to attend one or both days of the music extravaganza.

Spearheaded by festival chief Vince Power – who built up his Mean Fiddler empire and was involved in the Reading and Glastonbury festivals in the past – the event aims to distinguish itself from other festivals by having no corporate sponsorship or branding.

Mr Power explained: "After last year's success with Bob Dylan and Mumford and Sons, to name but a few of the huge acts, it's my opinion that the Hop Farm is well and truly on the UK festival map."

The festival has four music stages and includes comedy and campsite stages.

Tickets are now on sale. Weekend tickets are priced at £130 and day tickets at £70. Camping is £30 for the weekend or £25 per day. Children under 12 go in free.

Libyans 'deserve the freedom to run lives'

By **MARIJKE COX**

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A WOMAN who lived under Colonel Muammar Gaddafi's rule for two years has spoken of the violence she saw in Libya.

Rosemary Tennent, from Canterbury, spoke to Archant KOS Media as violent clashes continued between anti-government protesters, police and loyalists.

Since last week, the eastern half of Libya has been controlled by civilian militias who have rebelled against Col Gaddafi's ruthless leadership.

But protests continue, as activists fighting for democracy push for Col Gaddafi to stand down from his 40-year rule amid accusations of repression and genocide.

Mrs Tennent, who lived in Libya during the 1980s, said Col Gaddafi had a stranglehold of fear over the people even then.

"We were there in the first flush of affluence selling oil. Gaddafi was sending money to rebels all over the world, and funding guerrilla training camps in the desert," she said.

"He had his 'Green Book' of home-baked left wing philosophy. There were crazy decisions, like closing down all the fruit and vegetable shops. People were told to buy directly from the farms, to eliminate the supposedly greedy grocers, the middle men.

"It didn't last long. The one supermarket always had empty shelves, with sudden gluts of basics like butter. There were few luxuries, but bizarrely, there were shelves of rotting caviar. To get decent meat, you had to buy it 'under the counter'."

Mrs Tennent, a co-ordinator of publications for a federation of colleges in the United Arab Emirates, was in Libya with her then-husband, a teacher at the university in Benghazi.

She said she witnessed scenes of shocking violence during her time there.





UNREST: Protesters in Libya, and left, Rosemary Tennent

"One of the lecturers at the university had his dissident brother shot on a Greek beach after fleeing," she said.

"There was a hanging on the campus. The minority of fanatics among the students wanted to show solidarity with Tripoli students who had done something similar, so they hauled someone out of the jail and hanged him.

"It was really scary. Students were bullied, with clubs, into attending."

Mrs Tennent said there was much unhappiness under Col Gaddafi's rule.

"The Libyans have put up with so much. I really hope they get the freedom now to run their own lives without fear."

In April, 1984, British police officer Yvonne Fletcher was shot dead during a demonstration in St James's Square by Libyan dissidents opposed to Gadaffi's rule.

Mrs Tennent said: "Gadaffi made a speech to his people saying they should be kind to us because we were living under the oppressive rule of Maggie Thatcher."

After 15 years, the Libyan government accepted responsibility for the police officer's death.

Find more news and sport updated daily online www.kentnews.co.uk

Complaints fall

THE number of complaints made against Kent Police officers decreased by 12 per cent last year.

According to figures released by the Independent Police Complaints Commission, the force recorded 760 grievances in 2009/10, compared with 862 the previous year.

"Kent is one of the few forces that have seen a decrease in the number of complaints against its officers," said IPCC commissioner for the South East, Mike Franklin.

"However, I don't want to be complacent. Both the IPCC and the police are working hard to ensure members of the public who are not satisfied with the service they receive know how to feed that back to the police."

No compensation

RAIL operator Southeastern claims a fresh audit into punctuality figures shows the company did meet its targets.

It means long-suffering passengers will miss out on compensation, despite problems during the cold snap in December.

Southeastern passed the punctuality target of 82 per cent by 0.04 per cent.

Kent MPs and campaigners said they were not convinced by the figure, stating High Speed One – which is more efficient than the classic trains – should not have been included in the calculations.

MP for Tunbridge Wells Greg Clark said passengers should be compensated according to the disruption they suffered.

Praise for troops

CANTERBURY MP Julian Brazier has paid a visit to British troops serving in Afghanistan.

The visit was part of the Tory member's programme for the Prime Minister's review of reserve forces, of which Mr Brazier is vice-chairman.

He said: "I was impressed and humbled by all the encounters I had with our forces. The quality of the people was remarkable.

"Three men had been killed the previous week yet there was a great spirit everywhere."

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DE VERE VILLAGE

Afghan student lifts lid on root of violence

By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk

AN AFGHAN student has warned of more violent clashes between groups in Kent if historic disputes are not put to rest.

Speaking anonymously to this newspaper, the university student – who admitted fearing reprisals from the close-knit Afghan community for opening up about the ongoing problems – said age-old disputes between Afghanistan's different ethnicities was a root cause of violence.

It follows the fatal stabbing of Osman Shazad during a mass brawl between two groups of Afghan teenagers in Folkestone, where five others were also injured.

The incident, which happened in Marine Terrace on January 24, left the local community fearing for their safety.

But the student, who agreed to talk to this newspaper about ethnic tensions, said although fights between Afghans were common, it was rare that British citizens were involved.

"There is a divide between Afghan ethnicities. In Britain you have England, Scotland and Wales; it's the same in Afghanistan with the different areas," he said.

"People see Afghans as one people, but there are different types, such as Tajiks.

Ethnicities

"But in Afghanistan there are historical problems between the ethnicities, and this is passed through the generations by parents to their children.

"They are brought up being told by their parents that other Afghan ethnicities are bad and they become narrow-minded.

"The solution to this is education – they are not being educated neutrally."

The 24-year-old, who came to the UK at the age of seven, disputed claims that the violent clash in Folkestone was between two Afghan tribes from the Pashtun group.



ETHNIC CLASH: The murder scene

Pashtuns are divided into four tribal alliances which have their own code of conduct, but are treated as one ethnicity.

"There are only tribes in the Pashtuns; I believe this fight was more to do with ethnic divides, not tribal issues."

Asked why such violence was used in the brawl, he said: "Afghans are very nice people, but they are violent. They are mentally different – if they see something is not right they would do anything to make it better.

"In Afghanistan, people do stab each other. What is seen as extreme in the UK is not seen as extreme by Afghans.

"The solution is education and for parents to stop bringing their children up to be narrow-minded."

The student said there would be more clashes between Afghan groups in the UK until changes were made.

Focusing on British troops in Afghanistan, the student said their work was helping but he said Afghans needed to help themselves.

"The troops will leave Afghanistan at some point so it's up to Afghan people to think of the next generation," he said.

Charity groups in the county, such as Kent Refugee Action Network, help unaccompanied young asylum seekers adjust to life in the UK.

Kate Adams, a volunteer caseworker with Kent Refugee Help, which helps older detainees in Dover Immigration Removal Centre, worked in the past as a mentor for young immigrants.

"Some of our clients did come as minors and drifted into trouble after their asylum claim was refused and they became destitute," she said. "They are an extremely vulnerable group. I have worked in the past as a volunteer mentor and found the young people to be highly intelligent and motivated.

"Unfortunately, we as a host country often reject them when they reach 18 and they face removal to countries with unstable regimes. A prime example is Afghanistan."

A public meeting was held last Saturday in Folkestone to discuss the tragedy and reassure residents that the harbour area was safe.

Folkestone and Hythe MP Damian Collins said: "We were all shocked by this terrible incident, but now this is the chance to find out what we can do to improve the area."

Nine people were questioned in connection with the fatal stabbing. Four days after the brawl, Fazulmaq Walizada, 18, of Folkestone, and a boy aged 17, from Ashford who cannot be named, were charged with murder and violent disorder.

Protest for trees

PROTESTORS against plans to chop down 20 trees at a historic Broadstairs park will hold a demonstration next Sunday.

The trees are due to be axed to clear the way for the building of a new £2 million community centre at Pierremont Park.

"People are outraged by the whole idea," said campaigner Norman Thomas. "Pierremont is an incredibly small park – losing 20 trees will scalp the place."

The demonstration will start at 11am.

Assaults charge

POLICE have charged a man accused of forcing himself on to three women in Medway.

Philip Cook, 33, from Rochester, is alleged to have touched a teenage girl on the leg on a bus, attempted to kiss a 20-year-old woman outside Medway Hospital, and tried to grab a 28-year-old woman in Hermitage Lane.

He was charged with assault on Monday and released on bail, to return to Medway Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, April 27.

Anyone with information should call police on 01634 792421 or CrimeStoppers on 0800 555111.

Bank boss quits

KENT Reliance boss Mike Lazenby has left the company, just three weeks after a £50 million takeover was completed.

Lazenby will stand down from the newly-retitled OneSavings Bank on Monday, February 28, ending his 11-year tenure as chief executive.

His departure comes just three weeks after US private equity firm JC Flowers' takeover of the Chatham-based mutual went through.

Mr Lazenby said: "It has been a pleasure to serve members' interests as CEO of Kent Reliance and as CEO of OneSavings Bank."

Task teams to survive police restructuring

NEIGHBOURHOOD task teams are expected to feature in the proposed new policing model for Kent.

The teams – consisting of one sergeant and five PCs – were introduced in 2008 to assist in the ongoing fight against crime by tackling long-term issues in particular areas.

A report presented to Kent Police Authority on Wednesday suggested that their role be continued as part of the force's proposed restructure, which includes a reduction in the force's policing areas from six to three.

KPA chairwoman Ann Barnes said: "The authority has always viewed the teams as a worthwhile investment.

"We know from our consultation work that the public wants to see more police on the street. These teams do a great job, spending more time out of the office than their front-line colleagues."

The report found that recorded crime dropped by 10 per cent and anti-social behaviour by seven per cent following the introduction of the neighbourhood task teams.

It also says the teams lead to reductions in the volume of crime, as well as impacting on other offences such as burglary, vehicle crime, violent crime and theft.

Kent Police are battling to save £50m over the next four years due to a 20 per cent cut in government funding.

About 1,500 jobs are also on the line, including 500 officers and 1,000 support staff.



STREET TEAMS: The visible face of policing

It is proposed as part of the restructure that all six policing areas will be merged into the three larger districts of east Kent, west Kent, and Medway/north Kent, with the majority of officers positioned in the most crime-hit towns.

Mrs Barnes said: "I'm really glad the report suggests the teams should be included in the new policing model."

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THE INTERVIEW

BY JOE BILL

He's got something special

FRONTING one of the most recognisable bands of the 1980s and creating the soundtrack to a generation could make some people brash, arrogant even.

But that could not be further from the truth in the case of Neville Staple.

The talented singer stood side by side with Terry Hall as the pair forced The Specials into the hearts and minds of young people during the early years of Margaret Thatcher's premiership.

Staple's soulful voice can be heard on famous tracks like Too Much Too Young, A Message To You Rudy and Monkey Man.

But even now, 34 years after the breakthrough of the influential ska band, Staples still remains focused on his job.

He said: "I just like entertaining people. I want everybody to have a good time."



After The Specials split up in 1981, Staple found fresh fame with the Fun Boy Three with Terry Hall and Lynval Golding, as well as touring the US with the likes of Sting.

But Staple's fame has never stopped him remaining in touch with the fans, especially in his home town of Coventry.

He said: "You talk to them, of course. It is a privilege to have them as fans. People see me around town and say 'Hello Neville' and I will talk to them. I will always talk to anyone. Everyone knows me in Coventry anyway."

In the late 90s, Staple went on to join The Beat frontman Ranking Roger to create Special Beat.

And this old partnership will be revisited at Margate Winter Gardens on Saturday, March 5, as The Beat headline This Is Ska, alongside Neville Staple and Two Tone veterans The Selecter.





RUDE BOY: Neville Staple, left, and with ska band The Specials, above and right

"We will do some Specials, we will do some Fun Boy Three, we will do some Neville Staple.

"It will be a bit of a mix-up. Sometimes fans shout out 'Can you do that one?' and we'll do it," said Staple.

Following the Winter Gardens gig, Staple has his eyes firmly set on one final tour with his beloved Specials.

The group re-formed for a tour in 2009 that took them across the world. It was so successful they scheduled a second tour in 2011.

Staple said: "We have one more tour left at the end of the year.

"It is obviously not the same as it was before, but it was really great to see everyone again. A lot of people wanted to see it happen. I love touring and I will do my own tour after The Specials again. You don't just do it for two minutes and think 'Oh, I'll stop now'. I am dying to do it right now. I am bored, bored, bored."

And there is one song that the original rude boy will perform on stage, no matter who he is touring with and at which venue.

He said: "It has to be Ghost Town, without a shadow of a doubt. That is the one for me."

• This Is Ska, featuring The Selecter, The Beat and Neville Staple, will come to Margate Winter Gardens on Saturday, March 5. The show starts at 7.30pm and tickets cost £24.50. To book, phone 01843 296111 or visit www.margatewintergardens.co.uk.

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Expert says favouritism could decide referendum

Alternative vote may be decided on personality

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A POPULARITY contest between the Coalition leaders could determine the result of the Alternative Vote referendum, says the Prime Minister's former politics tutor.

Prof Vernon Bogdanor – professor of government at Oxford University – once described David Cameron as "one of the ablest" students he had ever taught when the PM attended Brasenose College in the mid-1980s.

And ahead of his open lecture at the University of Kent this week, the constitutional expert told KoS that support for Cameron over his Lib Dem deputy Nick Clegg will be key to the Conservatives winning the "no" campaign for the Alternative Vote (AV) referendum.

"I think you can only guess which way it's going to go by looking at the results of past referendums," said Prof Bogdanor. "The only other one we've had in the UK was the 1975 referendum on whether or not to stay in the European Economic Community. That ended with a two-to-one majority in favour of us staying in, which most people put down to the public voting for who they liked rather than the issue itself.



LECTURE: Prof Vernon Bogdanor

"Nick Clegg is unpopular at the moment so the 'no' campaigners might say if you want more of him then you should vote 'yes' for AV.

"It's difficult to predict because, as opposed to the General Election, this is only one question and it's an easier thing for people to make their minds up about. But then it's human nature to vote for the people you like."

Prof Bogdanor will discuss the AV referendum as part of the Lord Mayor's Lecture, at the University of Kent's Woolf Lecture Theatre, from 6-7pm on Wednesday.

Titled Coalition and the Constitution, the publisher of numerous politics books will give his predictions on what may happen if the first-past-the-post electoral system is axed.

"If these reforms come to fruition they will fundamentally alter the British constitution," he said. "Coalition politics will be the norm. But do the public want more coalitions? This is the point really. If you think they're a good thing then you should probably vote yes, and if not then vote no.

"But it's difficult for people to decide at the moment because they may view support for the Coalition as support for the spending cuts.

"People quite liked the idea of different parties working together at the beginning, but on the other hand there are many Lib Dem voters who would not have been aware that a coalition with the Conservatives was likely to happen."

Visit www.kent.ac.uk/openlectures for more about the professor's visit.

• ***For more about the AV referendum, see pages 14 and 15.***



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By **MARIJKE COX**

marijke.cox@kosmedia.co.uk



PACKED: Visitors to last year's show found plenty to interest them, and this year's show promises to be bigger and better than ever

THERE are just two weeks to go before Archant KOS Media's popular Travel and Leisure Show makes its welcome return.

Hoping to follow the success of previous years, the 2011 event promises to be better than ever, with a huge host of attractions.

For the first time in its four-year history the show, which last year attracted 4,000 visitors, will feature a French contingent dedicated to promoting the continent.

Visitors to the event, at the Dover Cruise Terminal from 10am to 4pm on Sunday, March 13, will also be in with a chance of winning a selection of prizes, including a two-week cruise, courtesy of Fred. Olsen Cruise Line.

Archant KOS Media events manager Liz Hare said: "Every year the show goes from strength to strength, with many people returning, saying they wouldn't miss it for the world.

"We have a completely new area this year, devoted entirely to France and featuring 17 French companies who have come across the Channel to take part in the show for the first time.

"Since its launch, this show has been very successful and with the registrations already pouring in and 41 prizes on offer, I hope this year will exceed all expectations."

This year's show will run during British Tourism Week, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of Britain's visitor economy.

Organisers behind the national event, which runs from March 12-20, gave Archant KOS Media official accreditation for its annual Travel and Leisure Show.

Visitors will be treated to a host of exhibitions from top travel and ferry companies, as well as information about attractions in Britain and Kent, for those planning to holiday at home.

Owners of the county's historic sites, gardens, attractions and other hidden gems will also be exhibiting.

Last year's show won the praise of the travel industry, with many putting in early reservations to secure display stands in 2011.

Sarah Hirsch, of Dickens World, said: "I was trying to think of words that would sum up the show, like fantastic, best show ever, great organisation, amazing, but it doesn't really sum up how good we find it.

"The show has gone from strength to strength over the last three years."

The event will host presentations on a wide range of travel and leisure activities, with exhibitions running throughout the day.

There will be hot and cold food and drinks, and face-painting and nail art for children.

Entry is free, and free parking will also be available.



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Beggar facing six Asbo charges

A BEGGAR has been charged with breaching an anti-social behaviour order six times.

David Bateman, of Palmerston Road, Chatham, was charged at Medway police station on February 16 and appeared before Medway magistrates via the virtual court.

The breaches of the Asbos are alleged to have taken place on Wednesday, November 17; Saturday, December 4; Tuesday, December 7; Sunday, December 12; Friday, January 14; and Monday, January 24.

Bateman was also charged in connection with a shoplifting offence at the Co-op on Albert Road, Chatham, on Friday, January 28.

He was given a four-year Asbo in September, 2009, preventing him from begging anywhere in England and Wales.

Bateman was remanded in custody and will appear again at Medway Magistrates' Court on Wednesday, March 9.

Cider thief pulled knife in store

A CIDER thief who threatened a supermarket employee with a knife has been jailed for five years.

Clive Tilley, 28, from Chatham, was found guilty last week of carrying out a robbery at a Tesco store in Gillingham last June.

Maidstone Crown Court heard how the thief tried to leave without paying for a case of cider, before pulling a knife on a member of staff who tried to stop him.

Tilley pleaded guilty to robbery, possession of a bladed article in a public place, and a public order offence of using behaviour to cause fear.

For 11 pages of the best deals for the New 11 Plate

Turn to page 71



Gorilla's walking antics gets 5m YouTube views



LITTLE more than a month ago, gorilla Ambam was an undiscovered talent living a quiet life in his enclosure at Port Lympne Animal Park, ***writes Marijke Cox***.

But like the many YouTube sensations before him, all it took was a moment of magic captured on camera to send him to the dizzying heights of stardom.

Since the 20-year-old silverback western lowland gorilla was filmed walking on his hind legs like a human, he has become a global star with the footage viewed across the world almost five million times.

The first 18-second piece of film reached a massive three million views, but after claims the clip was fake, staff at Port Lympne uploaded a second film which has received almost two million hits.

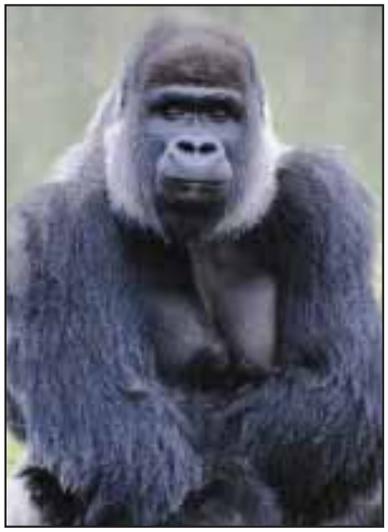
Visitors now flock to the gorilla enclosure at feeding time in the hope of catching the 34-stone beast having a two-legged stroll.

Phil Ridges, head gorilla keeper at the park, near Folkestone, said staff were totally unprepared for the response.

"Ambam has been exhibiting this behaviour his whole life," he said.

"Just days after uploading the clip the phones were ringing off the hook with people wanting to know about Ambam and we were inundated with requests from around the world for interviews and information.

"We have had a lot of speculation that it is a man in a gorilla suit or that he has been trained to do this but Ambam has not been trained in any way, it is just something he chooses and is able to do."



YOUTUBE SENSATION: But bemused Ambam can't see what all the fuss is about

Mr Ridges said there have been more visitors to the gorillas at feeding time.

"Ambam doesn't seem to know what all the fuss is about," he said.

"While his bipedal tendencies have captured the imagination of people worldwide we are hoping that his fame will have the more serious effect of highlighting the plight of the critically endangered western lowland gorilla.

"The charity that runs our parks, The Aspinall Foundation, is well known for its work with gorillas both at Howletts and Port Lympne and overseas, where we protect more than one million acres and reintroduce captive gorillas back to protected areas of the wild."

Footage of Ambam was filmed by animal researcher Johanna Watson, while she was working with the University of Manchester on a project about apes.

Mr Ridges said the behaviour was not unusual for the species.

"All gorillas can do it to some extent, but we haven't got any who do it like Ambam and he is quite a celebrity at the park," he said.

"We think he might use it to get a height advantage to look over the wall when keepers come to feed him.

"Standing up can also help him in looking for food generally in his enclosure.

"Ambam can also carry a lot more food if he stands and uses both hands, and walking on two feet also means he doesn't get his hands wet when it is raining."

• ***Visitors to Port Lympne can see Ambam and the rest of his group being scatter fed daily at noon and 3pm.***



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New centre helps us keep it green

BUILDING work has long since dominated the skyline on the Eureka Park in Ashford, but on Friday, March 4, a new £8million garden centre will finally open for business.

To mark the occasion it is launching a community scheme to get more people green-fingered.

Dobbies Garden World boasts a 48,000 square feet state-of-the-art store offering more than 10,000 plants, shrubs and trees, and will include extensive outdoor areas as well as a specialist aquatics department.

Some 120 jobs have been created as a result.

The Here We Grow bursary is open to local community groups, projects, schools and charities who need help to plant and grow in their gardens. There's more than £4,000 worth of gardening equipment and plants available to groups in Ashford and the surrounding areas.

Paula Tyrrell, Dobbies community champion, said: "We've launched Here We Grow to help communities develop gardens in their area so everyone has the chance to appreciate the wonders of green space.

"So whether you're a school, community organisation, charity, hospital or care centre looking to set up a veggie patch, garden or even just a few hanging baskets, we want to hear from you."

To nominate a group, write to Paula Tyrrell at community@dobbies.com or call 0131 561 6083 or see www.dobbies.com to find out more.

Dobbies has been running for more than 140 years and has 27 stores across the UK.

'The greatest day of

By **FLORENCE TENNENT**

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

THE Queen paid a royal visit to the County Town this week to meet the first regiment named in her honour in more than 20 years.

Her Majesty observed the 5,000th recruit to the Queen's Gurkha Engineers swear allegiance and commissioned three late entry officers before meeting some of the regiment's injured soldiers and their families during her visit on Thursday.

Despite a momentary threat of rain the sky cleared and the 300 men of the 36 Engineers formed up on the parade square in front of about 1,000 family members and guests.

Shortly after 11am the crowd rose as the Queen arrived, accompanied by her equerry Major Dan Rex, himself a Queen's Gurkha Engineer, and heralded by the Gurkhas' and Royal Engineers' bands.

She was met by Allan Willett, the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, and stood on a dais – a raised platform – for the national anthem before inspecting the new recruits.

Sapper Bal Budha Magar, 19, enlisted with the Gurkhas on December 10, 2010, and is studying military engineering in Brompton.

Mr Magar graduated top of his class in combat engineering and is the 5,000th recruit to join the Engineers.





Pictures: KMG

He stood first in line to be personally greeted by the Queen before the 18 recently trained recruits placed their hands on the British flag and were sworn into the Gurkhas in Nepalese before her Majesty.

Mr Magar said: "I feel very proud to take the oath in front of the Queen. I'm very happy.

"I want to continue the history of the Gurkhas that my ancestors began."

After the attestation, the Queen commissioned three late entry officers, who have already served as soldiers in the Army, by touching the hilts of their partially drawn swords. Captains Gurung, Dirgha and Limbu will now train at Sandhurst military academy.

Her royal highness was introduced to the chief royal engineer Sir Peter Wall and the colonel of the Queen's Gurkha Engineers, Sir David Bill, before greeting Maidstone mayor Eric Hotson, MP Helen Grant and Kent Chief Constable Ian Learmonth. She then reviewed a display of the regiment's work.



Santosh Goley, 24, has served with the Gurkhas as a bricklayer and concreter for five years and was among those who spoke to the Queen.

Mr Goley said: "Oh my God, it is the greatest day of my life, I just saw my Queen. I'll definitely be calling home to tell them.

"She asked me if I built this wall and I said

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Celebrate the birth of our most famous plane

SEVENTY-five years ago chief test pilot Captain Joseph "Mutt" Summers took to the skies in what was to become the most iconic fighter aircraft in history – the Spitfire.

The historic first flight of the prototype marked the beginning of a great love affair between the RAF and the aircraft, which became legendary during the Battle of Britain in the fight against the Luftwaffe.

After pilot Capt Summers finished the test flight he is said to told the engineers: "Don't touch a thing."

The prototype was converted into a fighting machine but was lost in September, 1940, during the height of the Battle of Britain.

To celebrate the momentous inaugural flight on March 5, 1936, a unique replica will be on display at the Battle of Britain Memorial at Capel-le-Ferne near Folkestone.

The imitation Spitfire K5054, built by the Spitfire Society, will be the centrepiece of a weekend of celebrations on Saturday and Sunday, March 5-6.

Among the activities on offer during the weekend of celebrations, visitors will be able to sit in the cockpit of the imitation K5054 and have their picture taken, enjoy a helicopter ride, watch aerial displays and hear from a living history group.

Only Fools and Horses star John Challis, who played the character of Boycie, and broadcaster Michael Aspel are taking to the skies alongside a Spitfire after they bid in a silent auction, held by the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust.

On the Sunday, visitors will be able to board the Home Front Bus, a red double-decker bus housing detailed reconstructions of a 1940s living room, a shop, a bombed street and an air raid shelter.

Trust staff agreed to open the Capel-le-Ferne memorial site early this year to accommodate the anniversary and are hoping to open every weekend throughout March.

Admission to the memorial and K5054 is free and anyone wishing to fly in the helicopter is advised to pre-book with Action Stations at www.goactionstations.co.uk.

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Picture: PAUL JERREAT





Picture: PAUL JERREAT

ROYAL VISIT: Right, Santosh Goley was thrilled by his meeting with the Queen. Centre, Sapper Bal Budha Magar was the 5,000th recruit to join the Engineers, he stood first in line to meet Her Majesty. Major Chris Warhurst is seated to the right of Queen Elizabeth II in the main image

of course, that's what I do. She said it was very impressive and I thanked her."

Her majesty joined the Gurkhas and their families for lunch and was presented with a traditional Nepalese garland before signing the visitors book and departing for Buckingham Palace.

Major Chris Warhurst, second in command, said: "It was absolutely nerve-wracking but luckily the professional soldier in me came through. We've been practicing in the pouring rain for the past two weeks so I'm glad it's all come together.

"It's a significant honour and I'm exceptionally proud of every man and woman who took part. What a fantastic opportunity."

The Queen's visit to the barracks coincided with a change in role for the regiment, from general support to the Army's premier advanced search regiment. They will spend the next five years working in search and bomb disposal roles in Afghanistan and the UK during the 2012 Olympic Games.

The Gurkha Engineers have served in every British combat since their formation in 1948 and moved to the Maidstone barracks in 1994.



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Booby-trap wife 'has no hatred'

THE woman whose husband tried to blow her up by booby-trapping her car with a stolen grenade says she does not hate him, despite being permanently injured as a result of the blast.



Victoria Fabian, 33, pictured, was injured when the grenade blew up as she got in her car with her eight-year-old son in Vigo, in March last year.

Her husband, former bomb disposal expert Nicholas Fabian, was found guilty of attempted murder at Maidstone Crown Court last week and sentenced to life imprisonment.

Victoria Fabian said: "I don't hate him. That would require too much energy. He's not the man I married, not the man I loved.

"We have children together and they miss him. They ask when they can see him every night and it makes for a difficult situation."

Sister superferry

THE second giant superferry and sister ship to the P&O Spirit of Britain has been officially launched at a shipyard in Finland.

The Spirit of France was floated for the first time on Friday and work has begun on the internal fitting of the superferry at the dock at the STX Europe shipyard in Rauma.

The Spirit of Britain came into service last month and the France is due to be delivered in September to work on the Dover-Calais route.

"With capacity for up to 2,000 passengers, and three separate vehicle decks capable of carrying nearly four kilometres of traffic, these huge ships open a new era in cross-Channel travel," said chief executive Helen Deeble.

The ships represent a £138 million investment by P&O.

Cash cuts warning over man-made flood threat

By **STEVE KNIGHT**

steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

RESEARCH which proves global warming contributed to the Kentish floods of 2000 should serve as a warning about the consequences of government spending cuts.

That is the view of Kent Green Party spokesman Steve Dawe, who claims the Coalition is failing to adequately prepare for climate change by slashing the amount it spends on flood protection schemes.

His comments are in response to a groundbreaking study by Oxford University scholar Myles Allen, who found that global warming made the autumn 2000 floods – which hit Maidstone and Tonbridge when the River Medway burst its banks – between two and three times more likely to happen.

Mr Dawe said the research confirms predictions made 20 years ago that climate change would make naturally occurring events more frequent and damaging.

He added: "Under the previous government the Environment Agency wanted £1 billion a year for flood defence projects in view of various floods going back to 2000.

"The Government agreed to raise the funding to £800 million a year, but now the Coalition is cutting this (by eight per cent to £540m a year). The justification for these cuts should now be challenged, because if they don't reverse the policy and recognise the needs of the Environment Agency then we will all end up paying for the consequences of further floods."



FLOOD RISK: The Hop Farm in Paddock Wood, was one of the victims of flooding

Between September and November, 2000, more than 500mm of rain fell in the UK – the wettest autumn since records began in 1766. More than 10,000 homes were flooded and £3.5bn of insurance claims were filed.

The latest research, which was compiled through www.climateprediction.net, represents the first time scientists have quantified the role of human-induced climate change in increasing the risk of a serious flood.

Experts say it could have wider consequences by making compensation claims against energy firms more likely to succeed.

But according to Mr Dawe, protecting residents from flooding should be the priority.

"We've done a lot of building on flood plains and put more people in vulnerable positions," he added.

"Ashford, in particular, is very flood-prone, and Yalding has had terrible flooding.

"If we don't spend the money on protection schemes when we're building new houses, then what on earth are we doing?"

Last March, emergency planners at Kent County Council drew up the county's most detailed flood response document amid fears of rising sea levels, storms and sinking land masses.

Emergency planning officer Tony Harwood told KoS at the time: "The Environment Agency has identified some 70,000 households in the county that are potentially vulnerable to either fluvial (river/stream) or coastal flooding, so we obviously need to be prepared to protect them.

"It's not good enough to come up against problems during a flood event – we need to do the proper planning."

Find more news and sport updated daily www.kentnews.co.uk



Devil in the detail of council 'good news' budget, says union

A TRADE union has attacked Medway Council, claiming spending cuts will dramatically affect frontline services, ***writes Mathew Beech***.

UNISON, the UK's largest union, has examined the unitary authority's proposed budget plans and has stated that libraries, adult social care and education services will suffer due to funding cuts.

The union states that, although libraries and Sure Start centres will remain open, their funding has been savagely cut, while adult social care is also to be hit, with a total saving of more than £2 million, despite needing an increase of £1 million in funding in each of the next three years.

Suzanne Tipping, UNISON regional organiser said: "It is time for the council to come clean over the scale of the cuts at the budget meeting later this week.

"The leader of Medway Council is trying to tell local people this is a good news budget, but the public should not be fooled, there is no good news here.

"The devil is in the detail. Local residents were told their library service would remain open – but our analysis shows it will be hit by savage cuts.

"The council says it 'believes' it can make savings, but that there are 'still issues to be resolved'. This is just not good enough for the thousands of local people who rely on council services."

In a pre-budget cabinet meeting, Medway councillors said it had been difficult to balance the budget in the face of cuts in funding from government of more than £23.5million.

A Medway Council spokesman said: "As is the case with local authorities across the country, the council is having to make some tough decisions as a result of central government funding cuts.

"For Medway Council, this has meant producing a budget that has to take into account a shortfall of £23.5 million, while continuing to protect vital front line services.

"As a result of this funding gap, and the additional 5.1 per cent increase in inflation rates, as well as the national increase in VAT, there have been inevitable increases in fees and charges."

As part of the budget cuts, more than 150 people are set to lose their council jobs.

Triumph

At the meeting, deputy leader Alan Jarrett said: "The loss of 150-plus jobs will undoubtedly affect people and that is obviously sad.

"We will have to reconfigure our services so that there is no detrimental affect.

"Some individual elements will go, which is inevitable, but it is a triumph of this budget that there will be no major impact to services.

"We will work hard with our staff to redeploy them across the authority, because we want them to stay with Medway Council and the public sector jobs are not there at the moment."

Leader of Medway Council Rodney Chambers said: "The truth of it is, there are no cuts in the front line services that we know various people and the community hold very highly."

Heritage fund 'lifeline' for decaying churches

HISTORIC churches across Kent will receive a share of £800,000 funding to prevent them from crumbling into a state of disrepair, ***writes Steve Knight***.

Cracks, leaks and general decay have left the centuries-old listed buildings in need of urgent maintenance work, with the individual costs to cash-strapped parishes frequently running into the six-figure range.

But despite the UK's dire economic situation, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and English Heritage say they have been able to maintain the £25 million worth of funding provided to such churches in 2010/11.

This year, a chunk of that money will be spent renovating nine Grade I and II-listed buildings in Kent, with a separate pot for Grade II sites being announced next month.

"Historic places of worship are some of our most treasured cultural assets," said Stuart McLeod, head of the HLF in the South East.

"They occupy a unique position at the heart of communities up and down the country and are a focus for so many civil and social activities, in addition to their central purpose as a place for prayer and contemplation."



The Church of St Mary Magdalene in Stockbury, near Sittingbourne, will receive £176,000 – the highest amount in Kent – to fund extensive repairs.

The Church of All Saints, in Northfleet, has been awarded £140,000 to fix the stonework and roof tiles, with the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Newington, near Sittingbourne, winning £96,000.

The grants were announced last week at the Church of St Augustine in Ramsgate, which was designed by the famous 19th century architect Augustus Pugin and will receive £110,000 for repairs.

Parish priest Father Marcus Holden said: "We are delighted with this grant, which will guarantee the future of this important site – Pugin's own 'ideal church', the place where he was buried, and his abiding monument to the landing of St Augustine in AD597. The church will now be able to remain open to worshippers and the general public."

Last year, KoS revealed how the Benedictine monks at St Augustine's Abbey had decided to leave Ramsgate for a cheaper home in Surrey.

Meanwhile, the remaining places of worship that will benefit from the joint HLF and English Heritage funding are the Church of St Mary in Sundridge, near Sevenoaks (£40,000); the Church of St Mary the Virgin in Great Chart, near Ashford (£72,000); the Church of St Cosmus and St Damian in Blean, near Canterbury (£89,000); the Church of St Mildred in Nurstead, near Gravesend (£42,000); and the Parish Church of St Mary and St Eanswythe in Folkestone (£43,000).





Pictures: PAUL JERREAT

BENEFITTING: From left, Great Chart, Stockbury, and Newington churches

Dr Andy Brown is regional director for English Heritage South East.

He said: "Thanks to the generosity of the HLF, and therefore of lottery players, our historic places of worship still have the vital safety net of the repair grants scheme.

"Without it, many brave but struggling congregations would be faced with watching their beloved churches and chapels falling into ruin."

Housing benefit plans 'will cut social housing'

SWALE landlords say women escaping domestic violence and other vulnerable people in need of affordable housing will be put at risk by government cuts.

The government has imposed limits on the amount of rent paid out in housing benefit according to the size of a property.

Hasmita Reardon is the owner of Reardon Properties in Sittingbourne, a firm that specialises in working with vulnerable groups in search of housing.

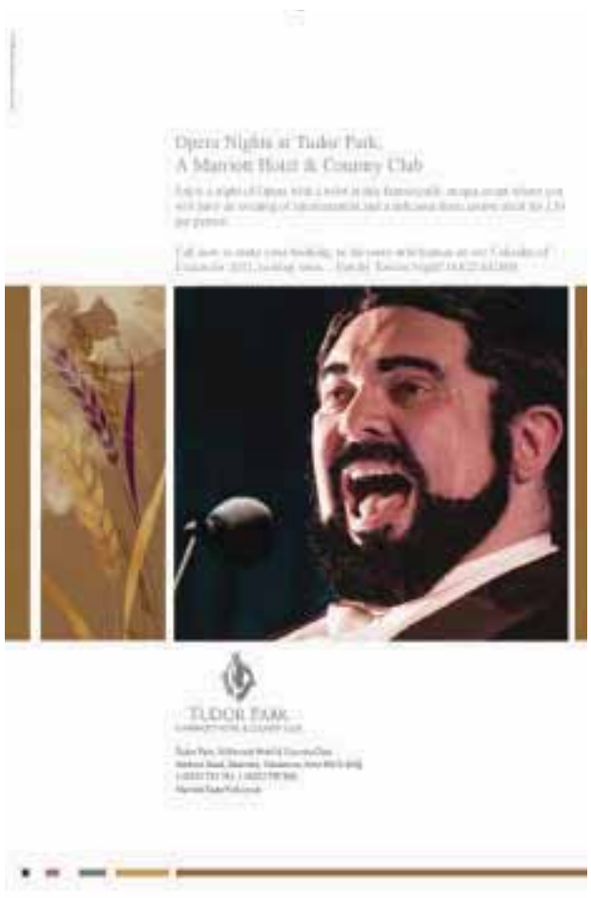
She said: "I specialise in working with the homeless and women on the run from domestic violence, but these changes to housing allowance are going to have a big effect on our ability to provide these services.

"By reducing the amount available in housing benefits, the government is removing any incentive for us to rent our homes to unemployed or vulnerable adults. We have a strong sense of social responsibility, but we are also a privately-owned business and to maintain the level of social housing we provide at present, we would have to significantly lower our rents, and that doesn't make sound economic sense."

This issue, among others, was recently discussed at a Q&A session at Kent Science Park with Sittingbourne and Sheppey MP, Gordon Henderson.

Mr Henderson said he was willing to take up any specific cases that were referred to him.

He also offered to have a separate meeting with local landlords to discuss the changes.





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There *is* an alternative,

ON MAY 5, voters throughout Kent and the rest of the country will be asked if they want to change the way we elect politicians.

In only the second national referendum in UK history, we will be asked to choose between the current first-past-the-post system and the Alternative Vote (AV) method proposed by the Liberal Democrats.

Under AV, voters rank candidates in order of preference. Anyone receiving more than 50 per cent is elected. If no-one achieves 50 per cent, the candidate who polled the fewest votes is eliminated and their backers' second choices are allocated to the remaining candidates.

It is difficult to say how AV would have affected the Kent results of last year's General Election, but what is known is that only seven of the county's 17 MPs – all of whom are Conservative – received more than 50 per cent of the vote.

The Lib Dems have long campaigned for a switch to an electoral model that is more favourable to smaller parties, and secured the referendum as a condition of entering into coalition with the Tories. On the other hand, the No2AV campaign – backed by Prime Minister David Cameron among others – has attacked the proposed change as undemocratic as it could result in the second or third choice candidate becoming MP and result in more hung parliaments.

But what do some of Kent's most senior politicians think about the AV system, and how will they vote? Reporters ***Steve Knight*** and ***Jenna Pudelek*** contacted representatives of the county's main parties to find out.

News and sport updated daily online
www.kentnews.co.uk



YES MAN: Lib Dem leader and Coalition Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg

Green Party

GREEN Party members in Kent have failed to reach an agreement on whether to support the 'yes' or 'no' campaigns for electoral reform.



Nationally, the party is supporting the proposed change to AV, but Kent spokesman Steve Dawe (pictured left) said local members were split.

"We're divided down the middle between those who don't see AV as much of a reform at all and those who feel it may set a precedent for further change," he said. "In view of the disagreement, we decided we wouldn't campaign at all. I'd be astonished if there were not similar splits among the Lib Dems, as most support a system of proportional representation, which AV is not.

"But they're desperately campaigning for it on a national level to show they're actually achieving something by being part of the Coalition."

Caroline Lucas became the Green Party's first MP when she won the Brighton Pavilion seat at last year's General Election.

But Mr Dawe said he did not think AV would help or hinder the party's ambitions.

"We will respond to any method and continue to fight for better representation," he said.

Liberal Democrats

A SENIOR Liberal Democrat has said if people want their vote to count they should say 'yes' to AV.

Tim Prater (pictured below), county councillor for Folkestone West, has already begun campaigning ahead of the AV referendum.



"People should vote 'yes' because it is a fairer system that would see more votes count towards electing whoever people want to see represent them," the Shepway district and Folkestone town councillor for Cheriton said. "In a first-past-the-post election someone – as long as they get more votes than any other candidate – becomes an MP.

"In some constituencies there are MPs with 28 per cent of the vote. So there are lots of MPs who have been elected with way under 50 per cent – so more people did not want them to be their MP than did."

Senior Tories have raised concerns that under AV people who support far-right parties like the BNP would get their votes recounted.

Cllr Prater said: "Those people might list a first preference for those parties, but their second preference would also be taken into account whether for the Lib Dems, Labour or Conservatives.

"More people will be involved in choosing who the MP is. I'm a democrat – I'm not scared of people voting in elections."

He said recent opinion polls were showing the 'yes' campaign had a 10-point lead, but added there was still "a lot to play for" before May 5.

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NO WAY: Prime Minister David Cameron's Tory side of the Coalition is against AV

Conservative Party

DEPUTY Conservative Party chairman Michael Fallon (pictured below) has made a forceful case against AV.



The MP for Sevenoaks, a strong proponent of first-past-the-post, said AV would mean supporters of fringe parties such as the far-right BNP and English Democrats would get their votes counted more times than those for mainstream Conservative, Labour or Lib Dem candidates.

"AV would allow MPs to be chosen by people's fourth choice," he said. "In other words someone who votes for the BNP gets to choose your MP."

Mr Fallon said he would be campaigning for a 'no' vote in the referendum.

"Under AV, the MP would be decided by people's fourth and fifth choice," he said. "So a vote for a fourth or fifth party – the BNP, Ukip or English Democrats – could get to choose who the MP would be.

"Their votes are redistributed and counted twice. Under the current system, I have half of the votes in Sevenoaks because over half the voters have chosen me.

"The AV system allows the final choice of MP to be made by those who voted for minority parties – that is the danger."

He added that the present system usually produced a majority government and reflected people's original choices.

KENT Labour leader Cllr Leslie Christie (pictured right) says a vote for 'yes' is a vote of support for the Coalition Government.



Cllr Christie says the Alternative Vote system will make hung parliaments far more likely in General Elections, resulting in party leaders being forced to compromise on manifesto promises.

He said he was also against the possibility of having to select a second choice candidate come polling day.

"I will be supporting the 'no' campaign," he said. "I don't want to vote for people I don't want to be in Parliament.

"I want to vote for the Labour Party and no-one else, it's as simple as that. The concept of coalition governments doesn't appeal to me and we will get more of them if we change to AV.

"That will mean the public will continue to get policies they didn't vote for due to the amalgamation of manifestos."

Cllr Christie said the AV system would have had little effect on the Kent vote at the last election due to the dominance of the Conservatives, but nationally it could have more of an impact.

He added: "I think my views are shared by quite a few Labour supporters, but it's a free vote and we will all make our own decision."

Labour Party

UK Independence Party

THE UK Independence Party will support the 'yes' campaign, despite leader Nigel Farage describing AV as "absolutely not the answer".



Mr Farage (pictured right), from Westerham, near Sevenoaks, says he hopes reform of the electoral system will make it easier to make changes again in the future.

"I do very much agree that the way we vote needs to change," he said. "First-past-the-post used to work very well when we had a two-party state, but we don't any longer.

"Last year fewer than 65 per cent of people voted for Labour or the Tories.

"AV is absolutely not the answer, but Ukip will support the 'yes' campaign because it would be the first crack in the dam.

"Once we've changed things once it will get easier for us to change it again.

"A switch to AV would be good for Ukip, but it's not the revolutionary change that we wanted."

Mr Farage added that many politicians prefer the AV-plus system, in which there is a top-up group of MPs whose election is based on regional votes for parties.

He said: "AV is preferential, but still not proportional. You could still end up with a party like ours that attracts more than a million votes but still doesn't get any MPs.

"What we want is AV-plus, which has worked very well for the Scottish Parliament and Welsh and London assemblies."



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MARLIE FARM

Pothole blamed for player's death

By **FLORENCE TENNENT**

florence.tennent@kosmedia.co.uk

AN inquest has been carried out into the tragic death of a local football legend.

Stuart White, 46, from Kingsnorth in Ashford, was killed when his car overturned in Zambia on Sunday, June 6, 2010.

A retired local football star and father of two, Mr White had spent the last five years working as co-director of a company in the African nation.

Coroner Rachel Redman chaired the inquest at Ashford magistrates court on Thursday, February 17.

Witnesses travelling in the cars before and after Mr White's vehicle on Mpongwe Road in Ndola believed he may have hit a pothole in the road, causing his car to flip over, shattering the windscreen and buckling the roof.

However, with only scant information from the Zambian police, there was some difficulty in determining the cause of the accident.

Dr Salim Anjarwalla, a consultant pathologist at William Harvey Hospital, carried out the post mortem on Tuesday, June 15.



MEMORIES: Folkestone Invicta manager Neil Cugley

He found Mr White had suffered multiple injuries including traumas to the chest and head, but also revealed significant heart problems that could have caused him to pass out.

Mr White had a history of heart problems and had been on medication for calcification of the heart and possible pericardial tuberculosis, contracted on one of his many trips abroad.

However, his wife Caroline confirmed he had never suffered a blackout.

There was no bruising consistent with a seat belt and Ian White, his brother, who was present at the inquest, agreed it was possible he wasn't wearing one.

Ms Redman ruled that since Mr White did not have a history of losing consciousness, his death was a "tragic accident" caused by him losing control of his car when he hit a pothole.

Midfielder

A graduate of Charlton Athletic's youth setup, Mr White went on to make a name for himself as a midfielder at Welling United before he was bought by Ashford Town.

There he became a popular figure, notably helping the Nuts and Bolts set up a meeting with Watford in an FA Cup second round tie during the 1996-97 season.

Neil Cugley, Folkestone Invicta manager, managed Mr White at Ashford Town and later again at Folkestone Invicta.

Mr Cugley said: "Stuart was a good lad, a genuinely nice person. It's easy to say that when someone's gone, but he really was good. Any functions with the club, he was always there and played in a lot of charity games.

"Everybody loved him at Welling, but he became a bit of a legend at Ashford as well. We had a good side back then, and Stuart was a very good player. He was a classy right winger and had great energy, because he'd go up and down the flank all day."

Mr Cugley still met with him regularly and recalled his enthusiasm for the beautiful game. He said: "His claim to fame was back when we played our midweek games on Monday nights.

"He had run the London Marathon on the Sunday but he came down to sit on the bench for the game. Somebody dropped out and he ended up playing the 90 minutes. I don't think he could walk for a couple of days after that, but he was that sort of lad."

A team of former Ashford Town players took on a side of Welling United veterans on Friday, October 1, 2010, in a charity match held in honour of Mr White.

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Police crack down on metal thefts

A POLICE crackdown on metal thieves in Bexley resulted in 36 motorists being prosecuted over a four-day period.

Officers were joined by council staff and representatives from BT and SmartWater Technology Ltd to target unlicensed waste carriers and identify stolen cabling.

Sgt James Coomber said: "This operation dealt a heavy financial blow to those involved in the illegal transportation of scrap metal.

"We have seen a sharp increase in the theft of metals across the borough, as the worldwide price has gone up by 30 per cent in the last year.

"I would remind residents that anything around their properties that they themselves could use to gain access to a porch or flat roofs, a thief could also use."

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Protest filmmaker promotes the cause of non-violence

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A CAMPAIGN filmmaker has spoken about the importance of peaceful protest and citizen journalists at a University of Kent event.

Zoe Broughton, a renowned activist, showed her latest work, Non-violence For A Change, which asks "where does non-violence end and actual violence begin?"

With the current freedom protests in North Africa and the Middle East as well as the recent student uprising against tuition fee increases at home, the event was timely.

Ms Broughton said her film was an updated version of one that was made a decade ago as a training programme for people to take part in non-violent protest.

She has added recent footage from protests, including the 2008 Climate Camp at Kingsnorth power station.

Martin Shaw, a campaigner who was at the camp on the Hoo Peninsula, speaks in the film about the delicate balance in protests and how peaceful protest is not passive.

"I was involved in pushing the police off site," he said. "There was an incredible level of discipline and coordination without any planning, as far as I know, that we were going to be actively resistant, but not aggressive."



Picture: KNP



PROTESTS: Police confront campaigners at the Climate Camp, and inset, Zoe at work

The police response at Kingsnorth was much-criticised. Kent Police have since admitted that the blanket stop-and-search policy was unlawful.

Ms Broughton was also at the climate camp, carrying out interviews, and remembers being searched, but nothing else about the "heavy-handed" police response.

She said when protests turned violent the danger was that media coverage would focus on that.

"Whenever you see violence on the TV it's a very small number of people involved in that," she said. "In the student protests there were thousands of people or more involved and the number of people that did partake in violence was very small, but the media coverage focused on that. I spoke to students who were sitting on park benches to stop people burning them, saying 'that is not what this is about'."

As in Egypt, peaceful protest can overthrow autocratic governments, but events in Libya show it can also end in bloodbath.

Ms Broughton added: "It is fundamental to democracy if you feel free to protest and speak up for what you feel strongly about.

"We need to have more citizen journalists making media. The more people making films in those countries, the better."

Her latest film also shows how campaigners are holding the police to account by turning surveillance on them. Images of the G20 protests show those involved capturing the events on camcorders and mobile phones.

• ***Ms Broughton's film can be seen at www.turning-the-tide.org or email stevew@quaker.org.uk***

More sightings 'proof of big cats in Kent'

BIG cat hunters are on the trail of a black panther after four different sightings in recent weeks, ***writes Gary Wright***.

Neil Arnold, who runs Kent Big Cats Research, says the animal has been spotted four times around Gravesend in the past two weeks.

He said: "These sightings are proof that at least one, large, exotic cat is in the area."

Despite scepticism, sightings persist of what is described by Mr Arnold as a "melanistic leopard" – often known as a black panther.

The first sighting took place on February 9 at Thong Lane.

Mr Arnold said: "A woman driving from the top of the road, near the golf course, observed a big, black cat. She got out of her car and stood in the bushes to watch the animal which she could see was clearly limping.

"The woman, who works with dogs, is convinced it was not a dog but a panther."

Three days later, eight people claim to have seen the panther in the Cobham area.

Mr Arnold, who lives in Rochester, said: "They had passed the mausoleum and were on a ridge looking towards Upper Bush when they saw, in the valley, a large animal walking slowly across the field.

"Although some distance away, the animal appeared to be the length of a human laying down, and cat-like"

Mr Arnold said he believes the sightings are linked to reports just a fortnight before of a black leopard at Anerley, near Bromley, by a 10-year-old girl. She saw the big black cat at 6.30pm while in a car with her mother.

He said: "The girl had seen the same animal a few weeks before, while getting ready for school. She stared from her bedroom window and saw an enormous black cat, bigger than a labrador, sauntering along the fence line."



WATCHING: Are big cats spotted recently in Kent the off-spring of former pets?

On February 14, a woman was tending to her horses on the marshes at Chalk, Lower Higham, when she noticed her animals staring towards a ditch. Through the undergrowth she could see a very large cat.

"The Gravesend area remains one of the most likely areas to spot a large cat.

"The main food source for such an animal would be rabbit, deer, rodents, birds, foxes and in some cases livestock," said Mr Arnold.

He has monitored such sightings for more than 20 years and believes they are the offspring of exotic cats kept as pets back in the 1960s and 70s but released into the wild when owners struggled to look after them.

To contact Neil Arnold, call 01634 819746 or for the latest sightings visit his website: www.kentbigcats.blogspot.com.

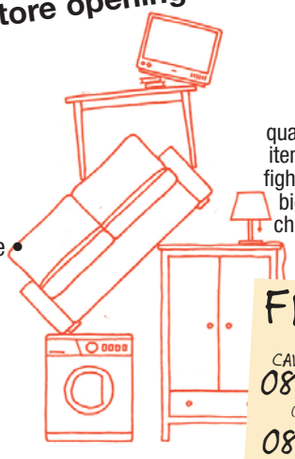
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Tourism suffers cold blow

MISERABLE weather has been blamed for a slump in the number of people visiting top tourist attractions last year.

While the amount of money the tourism industry pumps into the local economy rose again this year, some sites proved less successful.

Picturesque Sissinghurst Castle faired among the worst in the country in 2010, according to figures published by the Association of Leading Visitor Attractions (ALVA) on Wednesday.

The estate and its famous gardens, created by Vita Sackville-West in the 1930s, saw 154,530 visitors last year, which was 21 per cent down on 2009.

Volcano

Chartwell, the country home of Winston Churchill, near Westerham, saw a three per cent fall in visitors last year. Also a National Trust property, the home had 188,705 visitors in 2010.

Poor weather and the impact of the ash cloud from the Icelandic volcano, Eyjafjallajökull, on international flights have been blamed.

Meanwhile, Visit Kent, an initiative that champions the county as a tourist destination, pointed out that it was not all bad news. Knole House in Sevenoaks, which was not in the ALVA figures, enjoyed a record year with 95,000 visitors.

A spokeswoman for Sissinghurst said: "Last year we were affected by the poor weather at Easter, which has traditionally been a busy time and gives us a boost early each season.

"With the cold, wet weather people did not come out to enjoy the garden and estate. We were also affected because the bank holidays did not have terribly good weather."

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

A popular BBC series in 2009 about how fruit and vegetables are produced in the grounds and served in the restaurant saw visitors flock to the castle.

"We had a very good season because the TV programme generated a lot of interest," the spokeswoman said.

"I think so many people came and it might have been a bit busy, but they decided not to come back for a couple of years. It's a real shame."

She added that a programme of events had been organised for this season, including fairs and a children's Easter egg hunt to pull in visitors from home and abroad.

Elsewhere in Kent, Leeds Castle near Maidstone suffered in 2010 with a drop in visitor figures of 13 per cent.

Sandra Matthews-Marsh, chief executive of Visit Kent, said: "When compared with 2009, which was an exceptional year for visitor attractions in the county and saw numbers up by about eight per cent, it was no surprise that 2010 saw a slight decline.

"In general terms, Kent as a destination had a good year. Attractions showing a fall in visitors were outdoor venues which were particularly badly affected by the weather. This was reflected across the UK.

"What should not be ignored is that there were a number of success stories last year. Dover Castle, with its new Great Tower exhibition, recorded a 15 per cent rise in visitors."

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VISITORS: Sissinghurst Castle saw a 21 per cent drop

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Jailed football riot fan can finish term in UK

A FOOTBALL fan jailed in Portugal for his part in a riot during Euro 2004 will serve the remainder of his two-year sentence in the UK.

Fair Trials International said an application had been accepted but no date had yet been set for the transfer of Garry Mann.

The former firefighter from Faversham was extradited in May, last year, after losing a six-year legal fight against his conviction.

Mann, 53, has always denied being involved in violence and claims he did not receive a fair trial. The Birmingham City fan was drinking with friends at a bar in Albufeira when rioting broke out nearby.



GARRY MANN

The father-of-six was arrested, tried and convicted within 48 hours. He claims he was only granted five minutes with a lawyer before his trial, could not understand the proceedings and did not know what charge he faced until after he was convicted.

Mann's 16-year-old daughter and former Miss Faversham, Scarlett Mann, 16, said the family had been advised her father would probably serve the remainder of his term in Wandsworth Prison.

The Queen Elizabeth's Grammar pupil described a visit to her father in his Portuguese jail as "very emotional". She said he had found his experience difficult but was trying to adapt, even taking language classes in Portuguese. Mann's ex-wife, Anita, said the ordeal had affected the entire family.

Faversham MP Hugh Robertson has asked Foreign Secretary William Hague to look into the case, claiming the conviction was unsafe.

Jago Russell, of Fair Trials International, described Mann's case as a "travesty".

"Garry was torn from his home and family in the UK," he said. "He is the victim of a grossly unjust trial in Portugal. But he has also been a victim of rigid extradition laws and the European Arrest Warrant.

"Above all he is a victim of British judges who said they were powerless to stop an injustice staring them in the face."

The Ministry of Justice said no decision had been made on where Mann will serve the remainder of his sentence.

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Cat badly injured in airgun attack

POLICE are hunting for the person who shot a cat with an airgun.

The cat, named Beau, was hit by the pellet sometime during the afternoon of Thursday, February 17, in Medway.

Beau required veterinary treatment and suffered damage to his spleen, bowel, pancreas and kidney and is in a serious condition.

Officers have carried out house-to-house enquiries and are trawling through CCTV to see if the culprit was captured on film.

PC Marissa Murray said: "This was a mindless act of violence against a defenceless animal and I would encourage anyone who knows about this incident, or knows of people using pellet guns in this way to contact Kent Police immediately."

Calls for jab to combat growth in sex diseases

SEXUAL health doctors have urged the Government to vaccinate against genital warts as part of the school-based jabs programme.

Cases of the sexually-transmitted infection (STI) have soared, with an increase of 33 per cent across the South East since 2000.

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

More than 400 new cases per 100,000 of the population were diagnosed in Kent in 2009.

Medway had the highest rate of the infection, at 167 in 2009. Recent figures from Medway's GUM (genito-urinary medicine) clinic show cases of genital warts rose 36 per cent, from 302 to 412, between 2004 and 2010.

The British Association of Sexual Health and HIV (BASHH) is campaigning for the Government to switch the vaccine given to young girls to protect against cervical cancer caused by the human papillomavirus (HPV) to one that also protects against genital warts, which are caused by the same virus.

Distressing

Dr Colm O'Mahoney, a consultant in genito-urinary medicine and spokesman for BASHH, said: "Genital warts are incredibly common – 150,000 cases are now recorded every year, and that is a massive number of cases.

"I work on the frontline in sexual health and 50 per cent of my workload is managing and treating genital warts.

"It is a very distressing condition and I see many young women who find they have this ugly and disfiguring condition.

"It has a huge psychological impact."

NHS West Kent recorded the lowest rates of genital warts in 2009, with 120 per 100,000 of the population. NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent had a rate of 129 new diagnoses per 100,000.

Dr O'Mahoney said treating genital warts costs the NHS £50 million a year.

The current HPV vaccine, Cervavix, given to girls aged 12 to 14, prevents cervical cancer, but leaves them at risk of developing genital warts.

An alternative jab called Gardasil, which is used in vaccination programme in other countries, prevents both infections.

A survey by BASHH found that nine in 10 sexual health doctors would advise their own daughters to have the Gardasil jab.

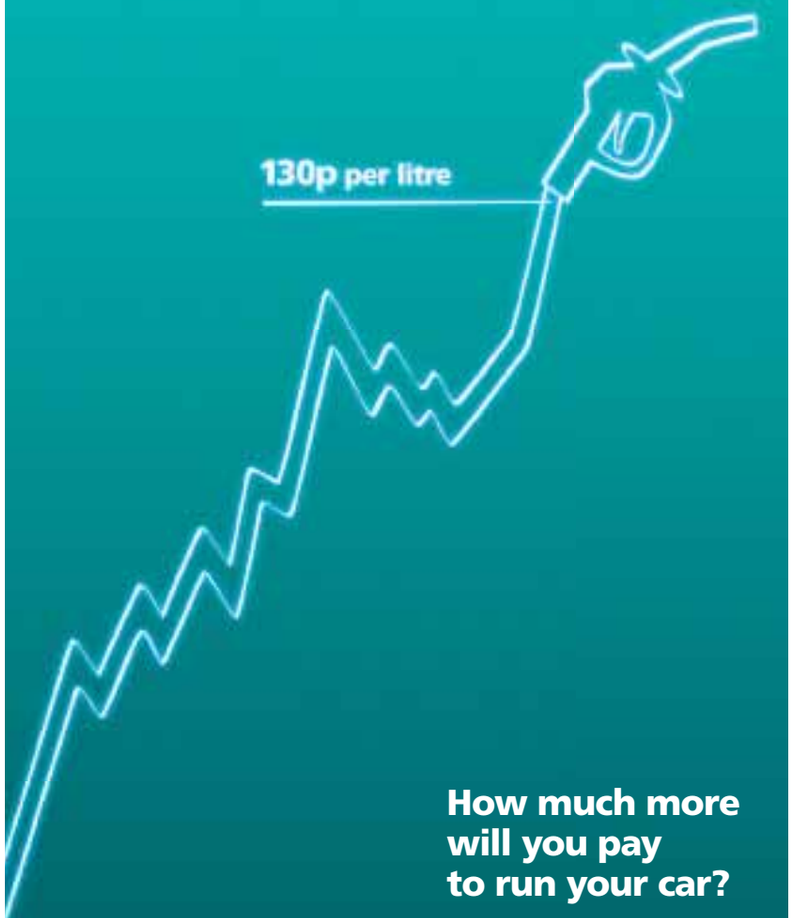
Dr O'Mahoney was among the sexual health doctors who met with MPs in Parliament recently to push the case for the alternative vaccine as the contract comes up for renewal this year.

"Britain is one of the only developed countries offering Cervavix rather than Gardasil," he said. "The reaction from MPs has been very positive. They cannot understand why Cervavix was chosen."

Genital warts are small, fleshy growths, bumps or skin changes that appear on or around the genital or anal area.

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Which way is wind blowing?

By **MATHEW BEECH**

mathew.beech@kosmedia.co.uk

THE public consultation period on the proposed extension of the Kentish Flats wind farm is coming to an end this week.

Vattenfall, the company looking to build 17 wind turbines in the Thames Estuary, off the coast of Whitstable, has for the last five weeks sought the views of hundreds of people who may be affected by the development.

If given planning permission for the extension to the 30-turbine farm, an area of eight square kilometres, more than seven kilometres off shore, would be developed, although a decision is likely to be more than a year away.

Vattenfall spokesman Jason Ormiston said: "The decision is in the hands of the Infrastructure Planning Commission, and they have said that once they receive a planning application, they will try to make a decision on the extension within 12 months."

Some of the key issues the public consultation has raised are the potential effect on red-throated divers, the visual impact of additional turbines, how business and leisure industries will be affected, and the impact the construction work and traffic will have on the surrounding area.

Mr Ormiston said: "We have conducted several environmental studies and they have shown there will be no significant impact. Any impacts there may be will be worked through in the final submission."

In October last year, Vattenfall confirmed its plans to extend the Kentish Flats Offshore Wind Farm with a potential 51 megawatts (MW) of capacity, in addition to the current 90MW.

Vattenfall expects the extension to generate just over 150,000 megawatt hours (MWh) of green electricity every year, equivalent to the total annual electricity needs of up to 35,000 UK households.

The consultation ends on Thursday.

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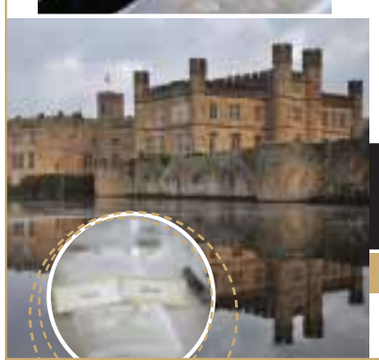
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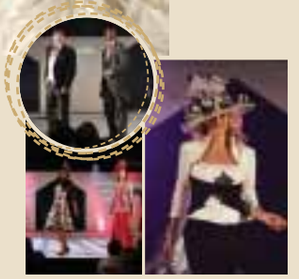
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12 DAYS £1399pp Quote RS10-KOS

Departs October 3, 2011

ITINERARY/INCLUDED:

- Champagne check-in
- Escorted throughout
- Return Eurostar to Paris
- Paris - Rome: 1 night each way in 2-berth cabin on Artesia train with light breakfast
- 4 nights hotel B&B in Rome
- 5 nights half board in Sorrento at a 4-star hotel
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- All transfers abroad



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PRESENTERS: Amanda Lamb, Jonnie Irwin and Jasmine Harman will be at the event

Arson charges

TWO men have been charged with conspiracy to commit arson and two counts of threats to commit criminal damage by fire following a series of blazes in Maidstone over five months.

Marc William Hitchcock, 19, of Oxford Road, and Neil Patrick Clark, 34, of Surrey Road, both in Maidstone, have both been charged.

On February 19, at Maidstone Magistrates Court, Clark was remanded into custody until a hearing at Maidstone Crown Court on March 4. Hitchcock was also remanded in custody.

A 22-year-old man arrested on February 17, for conspiracy to commit arson has been bailed until March 31 pending further enquiries.

Taking the baton

VISITORS of all ages are invited to come on board the Kent Cultural Baton and discover more about the county's ancient woodlands.

The baton is a silver Airstream caravan, which has been travelling the county asking people to share local stories.

The aim is to present the tales as a snapshot of Kent's history as part of the cultural celebrations for the 2012 Olympics. Free workshops will be held at at Shorne Woods Country Park, Gravesend, from noon until 4pm on Saturday and Sunday February 26-27.

See www.kentculturalbaton.com.



THE latest edition of Your Health magazine is now out, and focuses on mental health.

One in four people will experience mental health problems at some point, and the magazine looks at ways to improve well being and boost your mood.

This edition also features Fit for Work – a new service for working people who have been signed off sick from work for between four and 12 weeks.

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JENNA PUDELEK finds out how changes to maternity care are seriously affecting

Birth units feel the strain

SOARING birth rates and a shake-up of services in the west of the county are set to put pressure on stretched maternity units.

To keep caring for mothers and babies safely in east Kent, the NHS hospitals trust has been forced to close two of its midwifery-led birthing centres.

Extra midwives have been sent to the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford to cope with the huge number of births there, and it is estimated around 50 more of the specialist nurses would be needed to keep all maternity services running.

Meanwhile in west Kent, the Health Secretary Andrew Lansley has approved controversial plans to centralise women's and children's services at the new £235 million super-hospital at Pembury.

Consultant-led obstetrics and paediatrics will be based there, while Maidstone Hospital will have a new midwifery-led birthing centre set to open in September this year.

Women have the right to choose where and how they give birth whether it is at home, at a midwifery-led unit, or at an acute hospital. But coupled with the financial constraints of the NHS, this is increasing the pressure on the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford.

Lindsey Stevens, head of midwifery and gynaecology nursing at East Kent Hospitals University NHS Foundation Trust, said: "The issue for us is that the majority of births are happening on the William Harvey site, which has more than 50 per cent of births.







"There is an increase in birth rates in the whole of the South East, particularly in the Ashford area, there is also a full obstetrics, paediatrics unit and a midwifery-led unit [at the William Harvey].

"Women with low-risk births can choose the midwifery unit, but they have the comfort of knowing the acute unit is just upstairs."

The trust is also aware that when consultant-led maternity services at Maidstone transfer to Pembury, some emergencies will be transferred to the William Harvey.

At the moment, the trust has been forced to close its midwifery-led birthing centre at Canterbury and is unable to open the new centre at the Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother (QEQM) in Margate due to a shortage of midwives.

In 2010, east Kent had a total of 7,490 births with 4,180 at the William Harvey – including 662 in the midwifery unit – 2,745 at the QEQM, 215 at the Dover birth centre and 350 at the Canterbury birth centre.

"We have had to take staff over to the William Harvey. With the much higher birth rate at this site, midwives had to suspend services in one of the birthing centres," Mrs Stevens said.

The trust's review is looking at how services should be delivered across the patch, but she said it appeared women were choosing a 'co-located' birthing centre and acute unit.

"The feeling is that women are voting with their feet so to speak and choosing a midwifery-led unit," Mrs Stevens said. "They

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Facebook pictures land benefits cheat in prison

A BENEFITS fraudster who was caught after posting pictures of her wedding in Barbados on Facebook has been sent to jail.

Hazel Cunningham from Ashford falsely claimed thousands of pounds in benefits while enjoying holidays three times a year to Turkey.

Now the 47-year-old has been sent to prison for 120 days.

Cunningham's deceit was uncovered as part of an investigation by Ashford Borough Council's fraud investigation team when she placed photographs of her wedding in Barbados on the social network site.

Cunningham, of Bloomsbury Way, Kennington, was arrested, and when she appeared at Folkestone Magistrates Court she admitted four charges of making false statements, and one of failing to notify a change in circumstance.

She had failed to notify the authorities of maternity pay from her employer, and she had also claimed she was a single mother when she was living with her husband.

At the same time she was claiming income support, housing benefit and council tax benefit – amounting to an average £170 a week – a total of just under £15,000.

Ashford Borough Council leader Cllr Peter Wood said: "This case is another success for the council, who work tirelessly to ensure the honest tax payers of the Ashford borough are not defrauded.

"The message is clear: people who commit benefit fraud will be caught."

Cunningham had previously been prosecuted in 2009 for failing to declare she was working while claiming a total of £21,000 in incapacity benefit, housing and council tax benefits.

Now she must repay all the money she falsely claimed.

Sentencing her to 120 days imprisonment, magistrate Mr Miller, said: "You have had previous convictions, you have lied to the probation officer, you have denied your guilt until the last minute, and you have also lied in court."

Sex assault on boy, 11, at church

A PAEDOPHILE who assaulted a child in the toilets of a church has received an indeterminate sentence.

Allan David Reginald Martin, 22, admitted sexually assaulting an 11-year-old boy and attempting to sexually assault an eight-year-old boy.

Appearing in Maidstone Crown Court on Monday, Martin, of The Goodwins, Tunbridge Wells, also admitted breaching a Sexual Offences Prevention Order.

The court heard how he had joined a Maidstone church and in September, 2010, sexually assaulted a boy in the toilets there, using a game to get the child to comply with his depraved wishes.

Judge Patience ordered that Martin serve a minimum of two years before he can apply for parole, but he will only be released once it is determined he is no longer a danger to the community.

He will also have to sign on to the sex offenders' register for life.



ALLAN MARTIN

our mothers-to-be



SPLIT SERVICE: The new hospital at Pembury, above, is having a dramatic effect on uptake of birthing services at the William Harvey in Ashford, centre, and The Maidstone Hospital, below

have the security of knowing all the acute services are nearby."

Nationally, there is a shortage of midwives and Cathy Warwick, general secretary of the Royal College of Midwives, has warned the staff shortages "threaten safety".

Mrs Stevens said the trust's review was "all about safety". She added: "It's about making services equitable. Wherever the woman goes, she is going to get safe care. The issue for us with the William Harvey was an increasing birth rate, year on year, and a decrease at the other sites.

"It's about making sure women get the same service at the QEQM. That is why we've had to move midwives, to balance the birth-to-midwife ratio. We are not suspending services because of financial constraints."

Reality

However, she added: "Yes there is a financial implication. If we had more money we could employ more midwives, but we have to be realistic. Is that really viable given the financial constraints within the NHS at the moment? We have to work through that with the PCT and GP commissioners."

In west Kent, the NHS has won a hard-fought battle to create a stand-alone midwifery-led birthing centre at Maidstone with the consultant-led services at Pembury.

For the hospital trust and primary care trust this is about safety. But campaigners in Maidstone fear their hospital is being downgraded due to financial constraints.

Dr James Thallon, medical director at NHS West Kent, said: "This is about changing journeys of care and the need to focus expert resources on that small number who need urgent interventions. To do that we needed to centralise services on one site."

He thought some of the controversy would die down once mothers from Maidstone have the chance to see women's and children's services at the new hospital, which opened last month.

While staffing levels are causing problems in the east, Gillian Duffey, associate director of nursing and head of midwifery at Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust, said the trust was not suffering from a shortage of midwives.

"At MTW we have no vacancies and we ran most of this year with no vacancies.

"Staffing levels are good but we can never be complacent and strictly audit the number of women and number of midwives.

"We are investing in midwifery still to improve our ratio of women to midwives. We've managed a policy of one-to-one care at MTW, which is not something that all maternity units can provide."

Meanwhile, the trusts are hoping the Maidstone centre will prove a popular choice for women and there is evidence that mother-to-be are increasingly choosing less medical, more natural surroundings for their birthing experiences.

Mrs Duffey added: "We have made sure the consultant-led unit at Pembury is as little medicalised as possible. It is acknowledged that women relax more in a home-type environment."

Find more news and sport updated daily www.kentnews.co.uk

POLICE have launched a murder investigation following the death of an 86-year-old woman in Downham, Bromley.

Jean (known as Pat) Jobson was found dead at a house in Oakridge Road, on Sunday evening.

She had suffered head injuries, and was pronounced dead at the scene.

Officers from the Met's Homicide and Serious Crime Command are investigating under Det Chief Insp Cliff Lyons.

Police say next of kin have been informed.

Any witnesses or anyone with any information can call the police incident room on 020 8721 4961.

ICE houses have been known as a way to preserve food for thousands of years, and in Britain no large country estate would have been complete without one.

Though many examples of ice houses exist in the UK, most have fallen into disrepair. The old ice house in the grounds of Chilston Park, at Lenham, was re-discovered last year.

Ges Moody of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology plans to give a revealing talk into the history of the ice house on Thursday, March 10, at 7pm at the Charing Heath and Lenham Heath Memorial.

Entrance is free and refreshments will be provided.

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Axe still hanging over trees

By **JENNA PUDELEK**

jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

BEDGEBURY Pinetum is not out of the woods yet, despite the Government's U-turn on the privatisation of forests.

Environmental campaigners have welcomed the coalition's decision to abandon plans to sell off 258,000 acres of woodland run by the Forestry Commission.

Malcolm Dove, secretary of the Friends of Bedgebury Pinetum, said: "We are delighted they've abandoned the consultation, although the issue is not totally resolved.

"A panel is being set up to review ownership of the forests and we are not quite sure what it is going to do.

"Government cuts are still going to reduce the number of staff here, which will put more pressure on the friends to maintain the pinetum.

"So it is good news, but not all good news."

Bedgebury is home to 3,000 acres of woodland as well as the national pinetum, which is the most complete collection of conifers in the world.

Mr Dove said one out of the two Forestry Commission workers at the woodland near Goudhurst had lost their job, due to Government spending cuts.

Mr Dove added: "We are concerned there will be a gradual deterioration of the high standard we have here."

Environment Secretary Caroline Spelman told MPs last Thursday, February 17, that the controversial consultation on the future of 85 per cent of Forestry Commission woodland was being axed.

It came after the Government put on hold plans to sell off 15 per cent of public forests, which is the most allowed without a change in legislation, the week before.

The plans provoked wide-spread public outcry across the country, and more than half a million people signed a petition against the privatisation proposals launched by campaign group 38 Degrees.

Public outcry

Protect Kent, the county's branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), gave the sharp about-turn a cautious welcome.

"We must still make our voices heard and keep the pressure on our legislators," a spokesman said. "CPRE Protect Kent welcomes the government's decision to cancel the consultation on its plans to sell Forestry Commission land, but the battle is by no means over.

"The government is still allowed to sell 15 per cent of England's woodlands in each four-year public spending period, and this sets a dangerous precedent.

"This sell-off is still planned to take place over the next four years and, without the strictest of safeguards, could still have impacts on public access and biodiversity."

The Government said a new panel of experts would be created to look at public access and biodiversity within the woodland.

Steve Dawe, spokesman for the Kent Green Party, welcomed the coalition's U-turn.

He said: "This is a major success of a wide ranging coalition of individuals and groups against what may have been the most unpopular privatisation ever suggested."

• ***See www.kentnews.co.uk for more news from across the county.***



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UNCOVERED: The ice house in the grounds at Chilston Park, in Lenham, pictured in 1963

Ice house gives glimpse of life in the big house

A FASCINATING probe into the history of ice houses will take place in Lenham next month, ***writes Gary Wright***.

Used to preserve food for thousands of years, no large country estate would have been without one.

Now the history of the one in the grounds of Chilston Park, Lenham, will come under the spotlight.

It will highlight how ice was once a valuable commodity, and was imported into England from Scandinavia for wealthy households.

Usually, only large manor houses had purpose-built buildings to store ice, which grew in popularity from the 17th century onward and many were still used until the 1950s.

But with the advent of the fridge and freezer, most examples of ice houses in the UK have fallen into disrepair.

The old ice house at Chilston Park was rediscovered last year and an archaeological team uncovered it.

Next month, Ges Moody of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology plans to give a revealing talk into the history of the building and the work carried out at Chilston Park.

The manor house is now a 52-bedroom, four-star hotel set in more than 20 acres of rolling parkland. When it was built in the 17th century it sat in more than 3,000 acres.

Mr Moody will give his talk in the Charing Heath and Lenham Heath Memorial Hall at 7pm on Thursday, March 10.

It covers the history of the ice house as well as the work that was done last year uncovering the structure.

Entrance is free and refreshments will be provided.

This event forms part of the Heaths Countryside Corridor's Wandering and Wondering project, that aims to allow local people to explore the wildlife and history of the area around Lenham Heath and Charing Heath, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Landscapes and Nature for All (LNA) project.

Call Mike Phillips on 01303 815170 or email mike.phillips@kentdowns.org.uk for further information.

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THE Archant KOS Media's Travel and Leisure Show will have a certain je ne se quoi about it this year as a huge French contingent heads to our shores.

Back for a fourth year, the show at the Dover Cruise Terminal offers visitors great ideas for day trips, weekend breaks, and holidays abroad.

And this time there will be a special new Pas De Calais Zone to highlight what is on offer with our friends across the channel.

There will be 17 companies representing France at the show, which has drawn crowds of 4,000 people in previous years.

Archant KOS media events manager Liz Hare said: "Every year the show goes from strength to strength, with many return visitors saying they wouldn't miss it for the world.

"We have a completely new area this year devoted entirely to France, featuring French companies who have come across the Channel to take representation.

"Since its launch three years ago this show has been very successful, and with the registrations pouring in and loads of prizes on offer, I hope this year will exceed expectations."

The stands will include beer tasting, souvenir making as well as the two presentations being given in the theatre.

This year's show will run during British Tourism Week, which aims to raise awareness of the importance of Britain's visitor economy.

Organisers behind the national event, which runs from March 12 to 20, gave Archant KOS Media official accreditation for the annual Travel and Leisure Show.

Visitors will be treated to a host of exhibitors from top travel and ferry companies, as well as information about attractions in Britain and Kent for those planning to holiday at home.

Guests will also be in with a chance of winning a selection of prizes, including a two-week cruise courtesy of the Fred. Olsen Cruise Line.

After last year's show won the praise of the travel industry, many companies put in early reservations to secure stands in 2011.

Roy and Margaret Jones, from Go Cruise, said: "We're trying to think of words that would sum up the show like fantastic, best show ever, great organisation, amazing, but it doesn't really sum up how good we find the show."

There will be a full programme of talks throughout the day covering a wide range of travel and leisure activities. Food and drink, and a licensed bar, plus children's entertainment – including nail art and face painting – will ensure a fun and informative day for all the family. Entry is free and free parking will also be available.

The Archant KOS Media's Travel and Leisure Show will run from 10am to 4pm on Sunday, March 13 at the Dover Cruise Terminal.

For more details about the show see www.thetravelandleisureshow.co.uk or call Liz Hare on 01303 817172.

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Heritage grant paves way for restoration of Dickens buildings

By **MATHEW BEECH**

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AN historic house in Rochester, which appears in Charles Dickens' Pickwick Papers, has been awarded a grant of £80,000.

Medway Council received the cash for Eastgate House from the Heritage Lottery Fund which plans to renovate the house, transforming it in an exhibition and community space.

It also means the council can now look to apply for a further grant award of just under £1 million.

Built in the 1590s, the house appeared as the Nun's House in Dickens' famous novel. It is also home to what is known as Dickens' Chalet – where the writer worked. It was previously sited at his former home in Gad's Hill, but was moved in the 1960s.

It will be part of the renovation work.

The Heritage Lottery Fund will work closely with the council during the first phase of development work, which will take place during the next 18 months.

This will include appointing an architect to develop a programme of work on the house and support a recruitment drive for volunteers and the development of a friends group.

Medway Council's community services boss, Cllr Howard Doe, said: "I am delighted we have been awarded this development grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund that will allow us to further our work on proposals to restore Eastgate House and convert it into a permanent gallery and exhibition space for the local community and for visitors.

"This represents an important milestone in the much-needed restoration of this hugely significant Tudor building and reflects our ongoing commitment to restore and promote the historical and cultural sites Medway has to offer, which also includes proposals to restore Eastgate Gardens and working with the Dickens Fellowship to restore and improve the iconic Dickens Chalet."



WORDS: Charles Dickens' chalet, where he wrote, will be part of renovation plans

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Ministers back dockyard bid

By **FLORENCE TENNENT**

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TOP Government ministers have praised Chatham's historic dockyard and wished it well in its bid for UNESCO World Heritage status.

Town chiefs know clinching the prestigious title would provide a massive boost for tourism in the area, creating new jobs and breathing new life into all the towns.

But the battle to secure the status is not likely to be easy.

Culture secretary Jeremy Hunt visited the Historic Dockyard in Chatham with John Penrose, minister for tourism and heritage, last Thursday.

Each year the UK puts forward one site to be considered for World Heritage status from UNESCO and Chatham dockyard was shortlisted last year, along with 38 other sites, including the Straits of Dover.

Mr Hunt said: "An independent expert panel decides the bid, but having seen what I have, I wish them every success. If it is about the energy, enthusiasm and commitment of the local community, Chatham will do very well. I wish it every success."

Impressive

The dockyard has been heralded as a triumph of "preservation through re-use" as it mixes together museum spaces, shops and homes.

Mr Hunt said: "The historic dockyard at Chatham is one of the best examples in the country of heritage-led regeneration. It's extraordinarily impressive when you think of the black day in 1981 when it was announced that the dockyard was closing and how it has been transformed since then.

"It's tremendous for me, because what I'm trying to tell people is that heritage isn't something you invest in if you can afford it, it's central to a regeneration strategy for an area; there are 140 businesses here employing over 1,000 people, it's a real success story.

"It gives hope to a town like Chatham; it allows you to feel positive about the future, despite the inevitable turbulence of big changes when something like a dockyard closes down."

With the end of the Cold War leading to a fall in demand, the 400-year-old naval base and dockyard closed in March 1984, leaving behind 80 acres of monumental but neglected buildings.

A spokesperson for the trust said: "The first trustees shared a vision of delivering their charitable obligations by creating what they described as a living museum on the site as the way to regenerate it and, equally as importantly, place this part of the dockyard at the heart of the rebuilding of Chatham and later Medway's economic resurgence.

"Today the original idea is probably better described as the creation of a mixed-use community where there are 112 homes, more than 100 businesses paying rent and creating jobs and wealth, and more than 150,000 visitors each year."

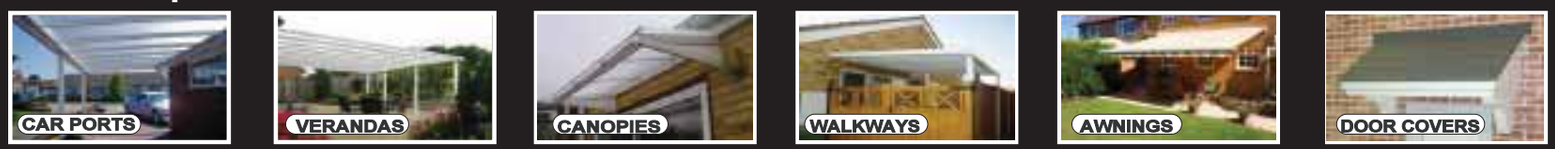
The revival of the dockyard was possible thanks to grants from Medway Council, the South East England Development Agency and English Heritage, among others, all of which are facing severe cuts and, in some cases, closure.

Mr Hunt said: "Based on the determination and resilience of the team I met I'm very confident they will continue to go from strength to strength"



IMPRESSED: MP Jeremy Hunt MP in front of No. 1 Smithery at The Historic Dockyard Chatham

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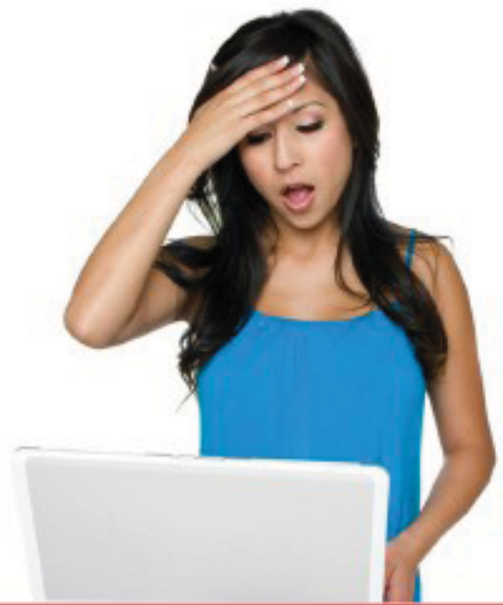
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£70,000 facelift 'a symbol of hopes for harbour'

Restoration turns lighthouse into beacon for future

By **MARIJKE COX**

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FOLKESTONE'S century-old lighthouse has undergone an extensive makeover to become a symbol of the harbour's promising future.

The two-month restoration of the 1903 building at the end of the harbour arm was designed to preserve it as a working lighthouse, and safeguard its heritage.

Those behind the work said it served as a symbol of the aspirations they had for the harbour.

Peter Bettley, of the Creative Foundation, the organisation behind the town's groundbreaking regeneration programme, said it was a sign of the ambitious plans ahead.

"The restoration was done on two points; the first for the equipment the lighthouse contains – the building needs to be a sound structure," he said.

"One doesn't think of Folkestone harbour as being vulnerable to the elements, but the lighthouse was showing signs of wear and tear.

"The other side to it was preserving the heritage. It's part of the overall programme to make the harbour a more attractive environment.

Improvements

"We have a good relationship with the fishermen and other harbour users, and they are very positive about the restoration.

"These improvements are a sign of what we are trying to achieve, without altering the kind of intrinsic feel of the place.

"The lighthouse is very symbolic of this."

Mr Bettley said the public are currently unable to walk along the harbour arm to the lighthouse, but there are plans to make the historic building accessible. The £70,000 lighthouse make-over, carried out by Tideworks Services Limited, included replacement of rusted ironwork, the repainting of the metal dome, doors and windows, and installation of a purpose-built glass dome to protect the light and workings.

The company also renovated the weather vane and completed an overhaul of the electrical installations.

Folkestone Harbour Company spokesman Trevor Minter said the work was part of an ongoing programme of maintenance work not often seen by the public.

He added: "It reflects our commitment to safeguarding elements of our heritage that both serve a function and can be envisaged as integral to future developments in the harbour."

The lighthouse was built as part of the final stage of the construction of the main harbour arm, which was completed in 1903.

It continues to house equipment that warns of shipping hazards.

For information about developments in the harbour, go to www.folkestoneseafront.com.



CHANGES: The finished lighthouse (top), during work (left), and in 1903 (right)

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Securitas heist robber taunts 'dumb' police

By **GARY WRIGHT**

editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

POLICE have dismissed taunts from Securitas raid mastermind Lee Murray that he could be freed from jail within a year.

The cage-fighter was jailed for 25 years for his part in the raid, which made headlines around the world five years ago this week.

He is serving his sentence in a Moroccan jail. He fled to the country after the heist which saw some £53million taken from the secure premises in Tonbridge in 2006.

Named as the brains behind the audacious raid during the trial of other gang members, Murray taunted authorities this week when a martial arts website exchanged text messages with him from behind bars.

In the exchanges, Murray brands Kent Police, who investigated the crime, as "dumb" and goes on to say he "truly believes I'm gonna be out sooner rather than later".

According to further reports, Murray's phone has now been confiscated from him.

He added his jail was "better than being in a UK prison any day".

But Kent Police slammed his comments, saying he was simply trying to "glamorise" himself and his crime.

Det Supt Mick Judge said: "I think what's sadder is that people do these interviews to glamorise what they did."



BEHIND BARS: Cage-fighter Lee Murray is serving his sentence in a Moroccan jail

Sentenced

Attempts by other news organisations to contact Murray were, the website claims, rejected by the cage-fighter.

Murray had originally been sentenced to 10 years behind bars, but this was increased to 25 after Kent Police pushed for a higher sentence.

Murray had fled to Morocco, with fellow gang member Paul Allen, after the biggest cash robbery in British history. Five years on, more than half the money has still not been recovered, although members of the gang have been jailed for a total of 156 years.

Murray, originally from Sidcup, claimed Moroccan nationality from his father's side.

Allen was extradited to Britain, but Murray was allowed to remain because of his dual nationality. But he was tried and convicted last year.

On the evening of February 21, 2006, the depot manager, Colin Dixon, and his family were abducted at gunpoint. Under threats his family would be hurt, the manager was forced to help them gain access to the Securitas Cash Management Ltd depot in Vale Road, Tonbridge.

There, 14 members of staff were bound by robbers armed with handguns and AK-47s and wearing balaclavas.

After the robbery, staff along with Mr Dixon, his wife and son, were left locked in cash cages, but were eventually able to free themselves and raise the alarm. Police began making arrests within 24 hours.

A white van containing more than £1 million cash was found near the Ashford International Hotel, just off the M20.

It would herald a series of arrests, charges and court appearances.

The jury returned guilty verdicts on Stuart Royle, Jetmir Bucpapa, Roger Coutts, Lea Rusha and Emir Hysenaj. John Fowler and Keith Borer were cleared of all charges.

Emir Hysenaj was sentenced to 20 years in prison with an order that he serve a minimum of 10 years.

Stuart Royle, Lea Rusha, Jetmir Bucpapa and Roger Coutts were given life sentences with an order that they serve a minimum of 15 years.

But Kayenide 'Kane' Patterson, who the police and CPS believe to be a key player, is still at large.

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LETTER OF THE WEEK

Gurkhas will need support

There is a fine line between highlighting an issue, such as the difficulties faced by Rushmoor services, and the potential for causing offence to specific groups within the local community.

However, I think we can all agree that there is a problem that needs to be addressed – and the ongoing debate as to whether this is 'stigmatising' Gurkha veterans is unproductive and a barrier to working out how the problem can and should be solved.

Sadly, I am not surprised that this situation has come about. While the granting of settlement rights in 2009 was a tremendous achievement, it has led to more veterans moving to the UK.

We now need to accept that the situation has been left open-ended, that this group of largely elderly Gurkhas is more likely to need support than other elements of society, and that where this support was coming from was a question not fully answered in 2009.

The problems facing services in Rushmoor are just the tip of the iceberg, and I would expect other local authorities to experience similar increased demands on their services in the coming months and years.

The view of the British Gurkha Welfare Society (BGWS) is that equalising the pensions for Gurkhas who retired before 1997 would help significantly – providing these veterans with the financial independence to remain in Nepal with friends and families if that is their wish, rather than moving to the UK out of desperation and financial need.

Bidur Pakhrin, Folkestone, vice-chairman British Gurkha Welfare Society

OPINION: THE GENERATION GAIN

Schools and communities working to bridge age divide will pay dividends, says Medway Council's portfolio holder for community safety, **Cllr MIKE O'BRIEN**

WHILE Kent is a safe place to live, with low levels of crime, many residents are still concerned about anti-social behaviour on their doorstep.

We've all too often heard about the effect disruptive behaviour has on communities and how it impacts on quality of life. A great deal of good work has been carried out to tackle this. In Medway, the council has worked in partnership with the police and others to stamp out antisocial behaviour, which is on a downward trend.



Of course, there is still much that must be done to rid our neighbourhoods of graffiti, vandalism and other unacceptable behaviour. We are always looking for new approaches to tackling these problems.

One is looking at how we can improve the way different generations relate to each other.

How often do we hear people say: "This would have never happened in my day" or "The youth of today have no respect"? We all know the youth of today will become the older people of tomorrow. But for many the opposite ends of the age divide are, rightly or wrongly, viewed with a degree of suspicion.

But does it need to be this way? Are there any ways of bridging that divide and finding common ground? In Medway we have launched an initiative that aims to do just that. As in other parts of Kent, we have a system of community meetings – colloquially know as PACTs – where residents active in their communities come together to talk with their neighbourhood police and council officers about issues of concern.

I went on a fact-finding tour of these meetings last year and it was the perceived poor behaviour of young people that emerged as a common theme – from vandalised flower beds, to intimidation caused by groups of noisy teenagers at the local shop. One thing noticeable at these meetings is the lack of young people who take part. No real surprise, I know, but the absence of a counterview has only helped perpetuate negative perceptions of young people. The challenge has been how to bring children, the schools they attend and the surrounding community closer together. How to break down those barriers and correct often mutually misplaced fears. Over recent months, two schools in Medway have experimented with a new-style forum to achieve this.

The School and Community Together committee, or SACT for short, brings together pupils from all year groups to discuss community projects and to learn about the impact of graffiti, litter and other forms of antisocial behaviour.

The idea is to raise the profile of the school in the community and to maintain the trust and support of its neighbours. Pupils at Rainham School for Girls (RSG) – the first to launch a SACT, in November – started as they mean to go on with an impromptu carol concert for residents of sheltered accommodation close to the school.

Both RSG and neighbouring Howard School – which launched its own SACT this month – are looking into setting up pupil-led computer classes for seniors, tea dances, and a community 'sow and grow' garden scheme. It is just the start. I hope schools across Medway and beyond will embrace this new initiative.

The SACT isn't restricted to a select group of young people interested in being active in their community. The idea is to embed its ethos into the daily routine of each and every pupil though pastoral lessons and regular assemblies. One fascinating thing I've discovered from this is the problems pupils are identifying and the perceptions they hold are a mirror image of the older population.

For example, at the last RSG meeting was the issue of road safety during the morning and afternoon school run. This was the same issue brought up by their older peers at the local PACT.

It goes to show the two generations aren't so different. The majority of young people are decent law abiding individuals who want many – if not all – of the same basic things. To be safe, to live in a clean environment, to have a voice and to feel they can make a positive difference.

KOS media COMMENT

Counting the heavy cost of downsizing

WHILE redundancies are an inevitable consequence of deep cuts to the public sector, the amount paid out by Kent County Council in just nine months is staggering.

The total of £3.8 million is almost as much as was paid out in the previous three years combined, which doesn't bode well with KCC expecting up to 1,500 job losses.

Councils say savings made through downsizing outweigh the money lost in redundancies, but that initial hit is surely going to have an impact.

It seems especially unfair when highly-paid public sector staff get huge payouts and are more than likely to move on to another well-paid post.

And so-called golden handshakes – written into contracts – when executives leave also seem excessive in a country recovering from recession.

When senior public sector staff can leave with more than most people's annual salary in their pocket, you can't help thinking that, for a few, redundancy can't be all that bad.

But it's not the same for the many who receive barely enough to cover the bills, in desperate need of a job and whose taxes help pay off these high-earners.

Contracts need to be drawn up much more carefully to make payoffs more realistic, especially at a time when every penny counts in the public sector.

Keeping Ambam's feet on the ground

AMBAM the gorilla has become an overnight YouTube sensation simply by doing what experts say gorillas have been doing all their lives – walking upright.

Watching the clip, you just can't help but smile and the researcher who uploaded the footage should be thanked, not only for bringing this shining star to wider attention but also for raising awareness of the plight of an endangered species.

Let's just hope the fame doesn't go to Ambam's head. We've enough troubled celebrities to contend with as it is…

Let tourism be our priority

Thank you for the excellent article last weekend referring to our often understated tourism trade.

Cllr Lynn Beaumont was marked down recently when, at a meeting organised by the SERP group, she said she objected to the Lydd Airport development as she, quite rightly in my opinion, considers it would adversely affect tourists visiting Romney Marsh and south Kent.

According to your Fact File, visitors to the area are now up to 56.6 million, an increase of eight per cent.

This really is excellent news that the odious Shepway council SERP group should spend their time developing, rather then fanatically zeroing into supporting the insignificant potential employment of Lydd Airport. Then again, as Shepway council are the landlords of the Lydd Airport site, we can hardly expect anything else from them.

The management of the airport are also trying to blackmail residents to agree to its plans, by threatening nights flights if the current public inquiry does not find in its favour to extend the runway for larger jet liners.

This has exposed them as ruthless, capitalistic businessmen who are prepared to sacrifice the benefits of increasing our tourism for Kent, just to satisfy a small bunch of shareholders who do not even live in the UK.

We cannot let a selfish minority ride roughshod over the best interests of our beloved Kent and the people who live here.

John Atkins, Greatstone

Better trains for more jobs

KCC is asking rail users in our area how train services could be improved.

Many commuters are aware of how poor the performance of Southeastern Trains was during December's snow and how services serving Deal and Sandwich have actually worsened since the high-speed service was introduced.

Michael Portillo said on his visit to Deal last year that our journey times were similar to those in Victorian times.

The journey time of two hours 12 minutes from Deal to London is too long, and the connection times at Dover for the high-speed service can be up to 37 minutes, and 57 minutes at Ramsgate on weekdays.

The devastating news of the closure of the Pfizer plant at Sandwich makes it more important than ever that the high-speed service is extended to Deal and Sandwich.

Attracting new companies and jobs will be tough, but faster rail journey times would give a much-needed boost to our local economy.

The closing date for comment is February 28. Please write and tell KCC and Southeastern Trains that we need a better train service at www.kent.gov/railaction plan.

Stuart Cox
Group Co-ordinator, East Kent FOE Group, Walmer, Deal

Ban alcohol in supermarkets

We keep reading about drunk teenagers, especially young girls, and nobody seems to have a remedy for it.

It's really quite simple; ban all supermarkets from selling alcohol and put the opening times of pubs back to what they were under the previous regime.

Alcohol could only be sold between 11am and 11pm, Monday to Saturday, and from noon to 10.30pm on Sundays. But since 2005, pubs, clubs and restaurants can serve alcohol 24 hours a day.

The Government condones drunken behaviour instead of tightening the laws that would stop it! Supermarkets have caused the closure of off-licences as they have most other high street shops; where will it end? We will have deserted towns full of drunks.

John R O'Neon
By email

Help unearth town history

I am a volunteer on the A Town Unearthed project, and last summer spent a day or two a week on the Roman villa site on the east cliff, Folkestone. I found it educational and great fun, and, as I also volunteered for the Outreach group, was able to talk to visitors about what we were doing. As publicity for the project increased the interest grew, which was great.

Now we're involved in processing the many finds from the site, including tiles, pottery, bones, and some metal objects. This is good, as now we can see up close everything that was found over the whole period. I'm sure that when it's all exhibited, there will be a lot of interest in what our town has in its history. I look forward to next summer when the site will be open to us again.

If anyone else would like to take part as a volunteer please get in touch with Hannah Lewis on 01303 850614

Valerie Collins, Hythe

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Including family announcements in partnership with the Kent registration service

To register Births, Marriages and Deaths contact the Kent registration service on 0845 824 7400
For advertising announcement enquiries telephone Kent on Sunday on 01303 817150

BIRTHS

BOTTOM
Millie Louise born on 20th February 2011 at 0:41am weighing 8lb 8oz. A new daughter for Robert and Leeanne, and baby sister for Jazmyne, Hollie and Jordan.

BROOKS
Charlotte Elizabeth Brooks born on 9th February 2011, weighing 6lb 11oz. Daughter to Zoe and Jamie Brooks of Maidstone.

BULL
Alfie Marley Glyn born on 28th December 2010, weighing 6lbs 6ozs. Son to Zoe and Glyn Bull in Dover, Kent.

DAVIES
Rachel and Mark of Ramsgate celebrate the birth of their daughter Erin Paige Davies on 12th February 2011. Welcome sister to Ebony, Ashleigh and Aston.

DURNELL
Sahara Harmony Willow born on 7th February 2011, weighing 7lbs 12oz. Daughter to Caz and Alec in Margate. Precious sister to Chris, Liddy, Mercedes, Tiara, Melody and Callister.

GASKILL
Poppy born on 9th February 2011, weighing 6lbs 9.5oz. Daughter to Emma and Greig Gaskill in Margate. Baby sister to Summer.

HARLEY
Natalie and James of Birchington are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful baby daughter Darcie Grace Harley, born at QEQM Hospital on 25th January 2011, weighing 7lb 10oz.

HARVEY
Rebecca Coomber and Stephen Harvey are delighted to announce that baby Daniel Benjamin arrived on 10th February 2011, and tipped the scales at a healthy 9lb 8oz.

JARMAN
Terri and Shaun of Margate are delighted to announce the birth of their son Jaiden Wallace Leonard Jarman, born on 8th February 2011 at QEQM weighing 8lb 3oz. You are the miracle who we will love and treasure forever.

KIRKDEN
Millie Jo born on 12th February 2011, weighing 7lbs 6oz. Daughter to Chloe and Gavin in Margate. Mummy and Daddy's special little angel.

LESZCZYNSKA
Marlena and Radoslaw celebrate the birth of their daughter Vanessa Maria Leszczynska on 13th February 2011.

LINGHAM
Erin Rose born on 10th February 2011 weighing 6lb 13oz. Daughter to Donna Yeomans and Keith Lingham, baby sister to Craig, Alex, Liam and Niall.

MACGREGOR
Karen and Darren of St Peters celebrate the birth of their son Caiden James Macgregor on 12th February 2011. A brother to Danni and Niamh.

MARDEN
Shane and Kerry-Marie Marden celebrate the birth of their daughter Ellie-May Bridget Margaret Marden on 10th February 2011, sister to Dylan.

O'LEARY
Chris and Katie celebrate the birth of their daughter Chloe Anne on 11th February 2011.

PENFOLD
Lisa Dunnigan and Paul Penfold are proud to annouce the birth of their son Leon Kenneth Michael Penfold on 11th Feburary 2011, weighing 7lb 11oz.

PORTER
Eva Susan, born 7th February 2011 at 11.10am at the William Harvey Hospital, Ashford to proud parents Richard and Jackie. A big thank you to the midwifery team.

PROCKTER
Chloe Prockter born 19th January 2011 weighing 6lb 12oz. Daughter to Richard and Sarah.

SMYTH
Shay Gerry Matthew born on 1st February 2011, weighing 4lbs 8ozs. Son to Joanna and Darren in Ramsgate. You are the miracle who we will love and treasure forever.

STOCKEN
Ruby-Mae Izabell born on 8th February 2011, weighing 7lbs 6ozs. Daughter to Ann and Chris Stocken in Margate. A sister to Sean, Angel and Tegan.

STREATFIELD-SARGEANT
Luke and Rachael of Herne Bay proudly announce the birth of their son, Jesse Luke, on 13th February 2011 weighing 7lb 10oz. A new brother for Bailey.

WALLIS
Jon and Jodie celebrate the birth of their son Harrison Stanley Wallis on 12th February 2011.

WIGG
Isobel Ruth born on 1st February 2011 weighing 9lb 1oz. Beautiful daughter to Stephanie and Matthew.

DEATHS

BOWEN
Rev V Paul Bowen died peacefully on 10th February at The Queen Mother Hospital, Margate, following a short illness. Loved by his wife, friends and family. Funeral to be held at St Michaels, Harbledown, on Tuesday, 1st March, at 11:45am. Everyone welcome. No flowers please, but donations to Christian Aid.

MANN
Phoebe Mann on the 19th February, 2011, aged 82 years. Dearly loved mother of Dave and Yvonne, grandmother and great grandmother. Funeral service at East Farleigh Church at 11.30am on the 8th March, all welcome.

IN MEMORIUM

JOHN O'BRIEN
In loving memory from your daughter and son, Elaine and Mark O'Brien. You are sadly missed. Died on 27th February 2010.

Recycling bags are a hazard to all

Do you get the blues... and whites when recycling day comes round?

I have never seen so much blue and white outside Gills match days. At least the footie fans get out of the road when a car comes.

These new recycling bags just lay in the road and are a hazard to all. Drivers' attention is distracted by trying to avoid running over the bags and getting them tangled under the car.

Hazardous to children, should they step into the road without looking, the drivers' concentration isn't where it should be.

I have contacted the council on several occasions on this, but get fobbed off with jargonese, as is their way.

If we reverted to the old blue and white sacks, firstly they can be tied tightly and no one can look through papers for personal identities. Secondly, they are not open to the elements and risk contents being blown away. The council insist the velcro stops this happening, but it still happens. Thirdly, if we recycle plastic carrier bags, in fact plastic all sorts, then surely the sacks themselves are recyclable?

Lastly, it would negate the collectors having to waste their time returning the bags to our properties as the sacks can be thrown in the cart as is, and I'm sure a time and motion study would show an extra half hour per road cleared.

Thought the council had to make cuts? Maybe if they left well alone in the first place they would be saving money and not causing problems for recyclers, drivers, pedestrians and tax payers.

Miss Herd, Gillingham

Labour the cause of our predicament

Re: Cuts being made by lunatic Government.

This government must be very brave taking on the mess the Labour Government left behind. If Labour hadn't run this country into the ground, by allowing the unemployed to receive more money than the workers, encouraging underage kids to get pregnant by waving a home under their noses. Even giving them disposable nappies, instead of making them wash their own. Allowing them so much money they can eat out most days, even allowing them enough money to run cars, 50ins televisions, etc. Encouraging more and more immigrants into the country without teaching them our language, not insisting on health checks and allowing TB to return. The Labour government ruined our NHS system, which will now take years to undo all the harm it has done.

We once had the best health service in the whole world, now we have to go to France, Spain, or Germany to get any decent attention.

Labour allowed the long-time benefit offenders to continue on their road of idleness and become alienated from society.

All these people should be forced to do voluntary work to get them back into work. Until we do that, this country will continue to slide into a deeper decline.

The Labour Government continued to borrow, right up to two days before they lost their position. They never gave a thought as to how we, the taxpayers, would ever be able to get out of the mess.

It was not the Coalition Government that has put us into this mess, it was the Labour Government.

All I can say is, if all the people in this country don't pull together, we will never make this country a better place.

We have to stop being so materialistic, work hard and we will be able to hold our heads high once more.

Name and address supplied

A warm invitation to old soldiers

In last Sunday's edition of your excellent paper, Mick Stanley reminded your readers that on March 1 it will be 50 years since The Buffs, The Royal East Kent Regiment, amalgamated with The Queen's Own Royal West Kent Regiment to form The Queen's Own Buffs.

A moving parade was held at Shorncliffe where I had the privilege of carrying one of The Colours.

Soon afterwards, we were flown to Kenya for an extended emergency tour and then, after a spell in UK, were dispatched to keep the peace in strife-torn British Guiana. The battalion then moved to Hong Kong for an odd mix of public duties, with periods of rioting thrown in, and then on for an active service tour in Borneo confronting Indonesia, who were trying to annex what is now called Eastern Malaysia.

All in all, a busy five years and 306 days (exactly) when along with the other regiments from the South East they again marched into history to become 2nd Battalion The Queen's Regiment.

You might have thought that this was the end of a happy and respected regiment. Not so. Today we have a highly active Queen's Own Buffs Association, 1,400 strong, with large branches in Ramsgate, Canterbury, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge (called Weald Branch) London and Colchester, where many settled after a tour based there.

Smaller branches are in Sandwich, Bromley, Hythe and, curiously, in Denmark, because many Danes served in The Buffs during and after the war.

Our membership includes those who served in any of the above-named regiments and many still march with pride at our annual reunions in Canterbury and Maidstone.

In this, our anniversary year, besides enhancing our two reunions, we are holding a gala lunch in London on Saturday, October 1, at which all of our old warriors and their spouses are welcome and will be subsidised for association members.

In May, some of us are off to Albuhera in Spain to celebrate the 200th anniversary of this epic battle, where The Buffs stood firm although badly mauled, the British eventually winning the day and putting such fear of Redcoats into the French infantry that it led to their defeat at Waterloo in 1815.

To show 'entente cordiale' we have a trip to Caen in September, to near where 141 Regt RAC (The Buffs) lumbered ashore in their flame-throwing tanks in 1944 to rescue our erstwhile foes from German occupation.

For all enquiries about the Association and its activities, call The Regimental Secretary, Major Dennis Bradley, on 01227 818052.

If you were in 8 Platoon, C Company in Kenya (1961), the then platoon commander, Mick Stanley, is holding a reunion in May and would like to contact missing members. Email him at salandmick@yahoo.co.uk or find him through me.

Colonel Crispin Champion, President of the Regimental Association, Tunbridge Wells

Speed cuts would be safer all round

Ian Taylor is, as usual, uninformed (Letters, February 19). First, Green Party petitioning throughout Kent and Medway has shown almost universal support for 20mph limits in residential areas.

Little wonder that there are a growing number of local authorities in the UK committed to this policy. These can be seen at the 20 Is Plenty website, www.20splentyforus.org.uk.

Secondly, drivers conditioned by general 20mph limits will drive accordingly throughout urban areas, keeping both air pollution and accidents down.

When 30kmh (18.6mph) zones were introduced in Germany, car drivers changed gear 12 per cent less often, braked 14 per cent less often and required 12 per cent less fuel, which negates Ian Taylor's arguments about pollution.

Also, if drivers feel 20mph limits will add time to their journeys, they will consider other options – as people already do – such as walking, cycling, public transport or buying over the internet. So 20mph limits are an important and low-cost route to relieving both traffic congestion and air pollution.

Thirdly, the recent 52 per cent increase in child deaths recorded by Kent Police on our roads clearly justifies a variety of measures, including 20mph limits, to prevent such tragedies falling upon families.

It would be exceptionally callous to maintain 30mph limits, given this evidence.

Steve Dawe, Kent Green Party, Tonbridge

Putting straight the record on transport

Thank you for printing my letter in response to Cllr Green's letter. If possible I would like to comment on his latest letter.

1) My letter did not imply that it was a "Not in my back yard" syndrome. It was purely on economic and financial grounds. There is an abundance of land surrounding the perimeter of Manston Airport. He says he welcomes moves to improve journey times to London and a possible daily link to a European Airport. Yet once again he is against the expansion of Manston into an international airport, denying work to the unemployed of Thanet. The proposed rail link is a high-speed link direct to the airport at Cliffsend, not into Ramsgate. Where are the brownfield sites in Ramsgate that he speaks of?

2) Ramsgate station and other stations in the area already have an excellent service to London, not only via Faversham, but also Ashford, for tourism. I am surprised he feels Mr Byers, the other correspondent, has insulted the residents of Ramsgate.

3) I am a frequent visitor to Ramsgate, but regrettably have to differ with Cllr Green. Has he been down the High Street and Harbour Street lately and seen the closed shops that have been put out of business since the Westwood shopping complex opened some six miles from the centre of Ramsgate?

4) I think that Cllr Green lives in a place other than Ramsgate. Perhaps he is too young to remember the Merry England Funfair and the fantastic open air swimming pool at the end of the seafront. He should consult his older colleagues on the local council for their memories.

TJ Aird, Sheerness-on-Sea

Keep Kent Working! It's jobs for Kent 2011 Campaign

Boosting the pool of IT talent



HANDS ON: Northgate Managed Services will be helping train 10 new IT apprentices over an 18-month period

TEN new IT apprentices will be starting an 18-month training programme in Tonbridge as part of a new scheme from Northgate Managed Services.

The young workers will be attending Hugh Christie College one day a week to study for an NVQ Level 3 in IT systems and support, and will receive hands-on training at some of the schools across Kent that Northgate provides services to.

Each apprentice will be given a personal development plan which develops core skills and competencies such as communication, time management, customer service, problem solving and more.

Northgate chief executive Andy Ross said: "As a successful and growing IT services company we are committed to working with young people in the communities where we are based.

"By offering an IT apprenticeship scheme to school leavers, we are developing a qualified and talented workforce that will help us grow our business and provide Kent with an influx of new IT talent. Hugh Christie is at the forefront of educational technology to drive teaching and learning. We are proud to be working with such an inspirational team to help deliver on-the-job training as part of our apprenticeship."

On completion of the programme, every successful apprentice will hold a formal NVQ qualification, have 18 months of work experience and the potential to move into permanent positions in Northgate.

Kent County Council's cabinet member for education, Cllr Sarah Hohler, said: "The Northgate scheme offers young people a fantastic opportunity to gain practical skills and work experience while working towards a nationally recognised qualification.

"These modern apprenticeships are exactly the type of initiatives we need to deliver to make sure students are equipped to meet the needs of a 21st century workforce."

Email info@northgate-is.com for more information.

Returning to full fitness

A SCHEME aimed at supporting employees suffering from ill health is being run through Kent County Council.

The Fit for Work project is a free service that works with employers, staff, GPs and other specialists to provide personal 'back-to-work' support and advice in the early stages of sickness.

It also helps tackle underlying health conditions and any other barriers to work.

Patricia Smith runs a private nursing home in Temple Ewell, near Dover, but when one of her employees required nursing care following an operation on her spine, she needed some back-up.

"My kitchen supervisor Jenny is a hard-working and dedicated member of staff," she said. "And I knew she would be desperate to

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knightl@kosmedia.co.uk

be back at work full-time as soon as possible.

"When you're a small business, as we are, having a member of staff off sick can be tough. However, I knew if Jenny returned too soon and took on too much that we would be back to the drawing board and that her recovery could take so much longer."

A referral to the Fit for Work service can be made by employers, the member of staff themselves, or their GP.

Once a referral is made, one of the scheme's health professionals will contact the employee to discuss a personalised programme and will be able to call on the help of a team of occupational therapists, employment specialists, psychologists and physiotherapists.

"They explained the service to me and I knew Jenny would benefit from their advice," said Patricia. "They met with Jenny and me, and we talked through some of the issues she was experiencing. We agreed on a 'return to work' plan which included shorter days, part-time hours and lighter duties to start with, until she felt fitter. They also liaised with her GP and other medical staff to ensure she was on the road to recovery throughout the process."

According to KCC, the total cost of working-age ill health in the UK exceeds £100 billion per year and can have a serious impact on business – particularly small and medium-sized companies. However, thanks to the Fit for Work scheme Jenny is now back at work full-time just six months on from her operation.

Patricia said: "Having the Fit for Work service endorse my concerns really helped. I would certainly use the service again. It's like having an extra pair of hands to help with staff issues. I would recommend the service to anyone."

Call 01843 830220 for more information or write to the Fit for Work Service, St Augustine's Business Centre, 125 Canterbury Road, Westgate-on-Sea, CT8 8NL.

WHAT is your business doing to help Keep Kent Working?

Are you running an apprenticeship scheme to attract young workers? Are your employees being sent on training courses to aid their personal development? Or are you funding a university scholarship to help find the businessmen and women of the future?

Send your good news stories to steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk or call 01303 817136.



Train & Retrain

Sponsored by KENT ADULT EDUCATION

Tools of the skilled trade

CONSTRUCTION students from across the county will battle it out in the annual Kent Skilled Up competition next month.

Young people aged 16 to 19 will tackle a series of tasks in the Makita-sponsored event, including brickwork, joinery, carpentry, plastering, tiling, electrical, and painting and decorating.



The heats will be held at five colleges throughout the county, with the final – hosted by BBC Grand Designs presenter Roger Bisby – at Thanet College on June 29.

Prizes of tools, gift vouchers and certificates will be awarded to first, second and third in each discipline.

Makita's regional sales manager David Hales said: "It's good to be working with the Kent colleges again and we're pleased to be sharing the skills of our demonstrators, who do a fabulous job with the students.

"Taking part isn't mandatory but will give contestants experience in being competitive, in working well and efficiently, and in helping prepare for professional life."

The first heats for this year's Skilled Up competition will be held at MidKent College, the Broadstairs and Ramsgate campuses of Thanet College, and Canterbury College on Wednesday, March 2.

The final batch will be on the following day at the Dartford and Gravesend campuses of North West Kent College, and the Ashford and Folkestone campuses of K College.

The competition is also being backed by the family-run Thanet Tool Supplies of Ashford.

Managing director Paul Brown said: "Helping young people while they train is to everyone's benefit and they deserve to have the best equipment andmaterials to work with if they are to do well. We're behind them all the way."



EYE TO EYE: David Keefe (inset) attracted the BBC's interest with An Audience With

Striking a chord on CBBC

A GRADUATE from the University for the Creative Arts at Rochester is in the running to have his short film for children picked up by the BBC.

David Keefe, 22, who earned a first-class honours degree in computer-generated arts and animation, uploaded An Audience With to the CBBC website with hopes it will be developed into a full series.

Children who visit the site are being asked to vote for the film, which is about a boy who is tormented by neighbours while trying to play his guitar.

David said: "Getting work on CBBC is a massive achievement for a recent graduate like me.

"It would be fantastic if they wanted to commission a series. I've got lots more ideas to evolve the characters in the film.

"Obviously it would be a challenge to get a team together, but being thrown in at the deep end is how I work best."

The best of Times at Kent

THE University of Kent has been ranked joint 15th in the UK in The Times' annual student experience survey.

The study – which scores universities in categories including quality of teaching, work experience and social life – also ranks Kent 10th for the most improved student experience.

Pro-vice-chancellor Prof Alex Hughes welcomed the findings.

He said: "This important feedback from our students reflects the quality of experience we aim to provide.

"By listening to students we will continue to develop all aspects of our academic, social and environmental provision – factors that have made the University of Kent one of the most popular in the UK."



BUSINESS TRAINING SOLUTIONS

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Visit www.midkent.ac.uk/employer-zone for more information.

01634 402020

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9 March 2011 or 15 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm
BEHAVIOUR MANAGEMENT
9 March 2011 or 15 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm
ANXIETY AND MOOD DISORDERS
29 March 2011 or 21 June 2011, 9.00 - 12.30pm
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22 March 2011 or 17 May 2011, 9.30 - 3.30pm

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For more information, please contact the **Training Solutions Team** on **01843 605032** or email **training.solutions@thanet.ac.uk**

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- Administration, Secretarial, PA
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- Scientific and Pharmaceutical, Research
- Transport, Logistics, Aviation

Canterbury Saab & Mitsubishi

Car Sales Trainee

We require an assistant whose role will be to help the car sales staff in their work to sell new and used cars. This will include direct contact with customers and also varied work helping with preparation, display and advertising of cars.

Applicants must be hard working, with good attention to detail and a full clean driving licence.

The position is full time based at our showrooms in Canterbury and will include Saturday work.

Wages according to age and experience.

Closing date for application is **28th February 2011**

For an application form please contact:
Stephanie Woodcock on **reception@canterburysaab.co.uk**

Westminster Road, Vauxhall Industrial Estate, Canterbury. CT1 1YY

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The smart way to find a job in the County

CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Barretts of Canterbury Limited is one of the oldest and most respected Motor Groups in the country. Established in 1902 the Group has 11 dealerships based in Ashford and Canterbury. It is rare that as many opportunities are available at once and merely emphasises the Group's progressive outlook even in such difficult times as these.

EXPERIENCED SALES SPECIALIST
An experienced Sales Specialist is being sought for our Honda dealership based in Canterbury. We are seeking a professional person with a proven track record at sales whilst maintaining excellent customer satisfaction scores. Even if you are reluctant to move before your March sales are handed over you should still contact us now to ensure your next career move.

TRAINEE SALES SPECIALISTS
We are looking to recruit a Trainee Sales Specialist for our Jaguar dealership in Ashford and also for our Canterbury based Land Rover operation. The successful applicants will not necessarily have worked in the motor trade before but they will be comfortable dealing with customers and colleagues and have a pleasant and outgoing personality. Full training will be given to the right people.

SERVICE ADVISORS
An experienced Service Advisor is required for our busy Malthouse Reception and also for our Land Rover Reception. Both positions are based in Canterbury and once again the successful applicants will be comfortable dealing with customers both face to face and on the telephone and be professional throughout. It is important that the applicants be good team players and experienced at dealing with staff at all levels.

MOTOR VEHICLE TECHNICIAN
A Motor Vehicle Technician is required for our Land Rover operation in Canterbury. The successful applicant will already be an experienced Technician ideally with the Land Rover franchise. However, full training will be given to the right applicant. This is an exciting time for Land Rover with the new Evoque due to arrive in September of this year.

Please send your CV for the attention of Lana Farr at:
Barretts of Canterbury Ltd, 28 - 30 St Peters Street,
Canterbury, Kent CT1 2BL

Closing date 11/3/11

A marque in itself — Barretts

Pilgrims Hospices Lottery

We need you!!

- Would you like to earn some extra cash and help raise money for Pilgrims Hospices?
- Flexible hours to suit you.
- We are looking for individuals to collect membership subscriptions from already estabilised rounds in parts of East Kent.
- Canvassers also required in some areas to gain new Lottery members.

- Self-employed position.
- Standard CRB disclosure may be required for successful applicants.

Please call Shiralee on 01227 379741 for further details

Port Regis Residential Care Home for the Elderly in Broadstairs
require
Day Carers
Full time or Part time
Tel: 01843 602266

To advertise in this section
01303 817040

Edenbridge Town Council

Groundsman

To work in the Council's parks, playing fields, cemetery, open spaces, on Public Rights of Way (under KCC authority), and other contracts entered into by the Council. To assist with the maintenance of the amenities areas including making sure that the parks, recreation grounds and playgrounds are kept clean and litter free. To maintain a high standard of work and to ensure that the Council's name is kept in good standing.

It is a full-time permanent post attracting a salary of **£15,594 per annum.**
Application forms can be collected from **Edenbridge Town Council, Doggetts Barn, 72A High St, Edenbridge, Kent, TN8 5AR** or by email from **townclerk@edenbridgetowncouncil.gov.uk**

The closing date for applications is **noon Monday 7 March 2011**
Interviews to be held on **Monday 14 March**

Tour Drivers

To join our team of male and female contracted drivers for the European summer season

Contiki Holidays is the World's No. 1 Travel Company for 18-35's.

Being a Tour Driver for Contiki Holidays gives you the opportunity you've been looking for to travel Europe and get paid while doing it! If you want to help share the sights of Europe with others and you have the essential qualities we require then you could be just an interview away from a place on our training programme (starts March). Thorough training is provided, so experience is not essential.

Essential Qualities

- ***Hold a UK or European Union passport***
- ***Hold a Manual PCV (cat D) licence***
- *Have good references and driving record*
- *Possess excellent people skills*
- *English speaking (fluent)*
- *Must work well as part of a team*
- *Have a genuine desire to succeed*

contiki HOLIDAYS for 18-35's



Apply online **contiki.com/jobs**

WEEKEND DOMESTIC ASSISTANT
required
to work in a residential home in Faversham for the elderly.
9 – 2 pm.
For further details please call
01795 532629 between 10 – 4 pm

SUPPORT WORKERS

Required
To assist in the provision of complete range of social, physical and personal care to adults with learning and physical disabilities, with the aim to enhance their independence in all areas.
Position part-time. Varied hours.
Need to drive due to rural location in between Sittingbourne and Faversham.
For more information contact Sally Brooks
Tel: 01795 886220 or
email: ellenscourt@btconnect.com

WELLNESS COACHES REQUIRED

We are a Health & Nutrition company looking for serious people who want to earn £500-£1000+ per month full/part-time working from home.

Full training and support available.
01622 671716

Distributors required

Opportunities are available to join our team of Distributors delivering our newspapers to shops and businesses.

This position is for Friday evenings or Saturday mornings 2/3 hours

You will need to be at ease talking to the public and capable of working under your own initiative, and be of smart appearance, as you will become a representative of our award winning company.

Rate of pay is £6.50 per hour plus mileage allowance if relevant.

If interested, please contact **Barbara Coker on 01303 817072**

ARCHANT KOS MEDIA

Apple Barn, Hythe Road,
Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SS

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the place to feel at home

We make a difference, do you want to?

RGN's

Signature Senior Lifestyle is a young dynamic company committed to enhancing the lives older People and is presently looking to recruit **RGN's** at our community in Herne Bay, Kent.

You will ensure that a high standard of nursing care is delivered in a consistent professional manner based on the assessment of care needs and in consultation with residents, their relatives and the care team.

Signature Community's offer an exciting environment, where dignity and respect for others is an absolute prerequisite.

If interested please call **Dan Quinlan, HR Coordinator** on **01227 376263** or email your CV to **hr.miramar@signaturesl.co.uk**

To learn more about us visit our website at: **www.signature-care-homes.co.uk**

Public Sector

You can also find the latest jobs online: www.jobsforkent.co.uk

KOSMEDIA | Telephone: 01303 817040 | Fax: 01303 817004 | Email: appointments@kosmedia.co.uk | Online: www.jobsforkent.co.uk

Hugh Christie

White Cottage Road, Tonbridge, Kent TN10 3PU

TEACHER OF FRENCH
FULL TIME
Required for September 2011

We are seeking to appoint an enthusiastic Teacher of French. The successful candidate will be delivering GCSE French as part of our English Baccalaureate.

Hugh Christie Technology College is a good school with outstanding features.

Located in a total new build, the school has a national and international reputation for the use of technology and curriculum innovation.

For further information contact **Jenny Rutherford jrutherford@hughchristie.kent.sch.uk**

Closing date for applications: **18th March 2011**

Interviews to be held: week commencing 28th March 2011

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children. As part of this process, all successful candidates will be required to apply for an enhanced CRB disclosure.

The Folkestone academy

SEASONAL GROUNDS PERSON

Six Months contract to commence April 2011
20 hours per week
Salary: £6.50 per hour

We are looking to appoint a Seasonal Grounds person on a six month fixed term contract to commence April 2011 based at Folkestone All Age Academy.

Duties to include grass cutting; weeding; litter picking and general grounds work. Experience of cutting machinery an advantage however full training will be given.

For further details please go to our website at www.folkestoneacademy.com or contact Marion Wigington on 01843 598550 for further details.

Closing date: Monday 2nd March 2011

The Folkestone Academy is committed to the safeguarding of children and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to appropriate child protection screening including checks with previous employers and the Criminal Records Bureau. The Academy is an equal opportunities employer.

The Folkestone Academy
Academy Lane, Folkestone, Kent CT19 5FP
Tel: 01303 842400 • Email: admin@folkestoneacademy.com

To advertise in this section
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The smart way to find your next job
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Abbey Court School

"We grow people"

…….a 'special' school and a 'special' place to work.

We are currently looking for…

TEACHING ASSISTANTS

to join and enhance our large and expanding, high calibre team.

Medway Scale, Grade D2
£15,039 - £19,126 pro-rata + SEN Allowance (£1,177)

Are you committed, motivated and enthusiastic? Does 'Every Child Matter' to you? Can you make a difference? If so, share your talents and expertise with us.

Abbey Court is located on 2 sites; Rainham (Nursery and Primary) and Strood (Secondary and Further Education), and caters for pupils aged 3-19 with Severe Learning Difficulties. Working hours are 32.5 p/w (8.45am – 3.45pm), term time only. Previous experience and/or NNEB (or equivalent) qualifications preferred. Comprehensive training and induction will be provided.

Due to the conditions and complex needs of the pupils at Abbey Court School, continuity and consistency of support is paramount and therefore candidates for all positions will need to commit to the full working hours of the post.

This School is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people, and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of appointment for post is subject to a satisfactory Criminal Record Bureau Disclosure.

For an application pack, please write to/telephone (stating the role for which you are applying):
Mrs Linda Taylor, Abbey Court School, Rede Court Road, Strood, Kent. ME2 3SP (01634 338236)

Please note CV's will not be accepted.

Closing date: 11.3.11

Teachers Needed

Primary, Secondary and SEN.

Capita Education Resourcing is the leading provider of educational staff throughout the UK.

Our dedicated and friendly Kent team can provide you with:

- ✔ Daily/weekly/termly supply opportunities
- ✔ Excellent rates of pay – paid weekly
- ✔ Free in-service training and CPD assessment
- ✔ Free use of resource centre
- ✔ An out-of-hours service

Even if you can only spare one day a week we would love to hear from you.

To find out more information and to register with us, please call us free on:
0800 731 6871
or email enquiry.ers@capita.co.uk

CAPITA EDUCATION RESOURCING (Agy)

Committed to equal opportunities

TOWNSCAPE IMPROVEMENT OFFICER

Location: **Civic Centre, Folkestone**
Salary: **£25,620 - £30,201 plus essential car user allowance**

Shepway is a coastal district undergoing a transformation through a range of public and private sector initiatives. To complement this activity, the district is keen to ensure that the urban environment across all its towns is improved. As such, a new post has been created within the Economic Regeneration Team to tackle townscape issues.

Your role will be to develop a Townscape Improvement Strategy for the district in collaboration with partner organisations and implement it through a wide range of initiatives.

Application details on this exciting new position can be accessed via **www.shepway.gov.uk** or alternatively if you would like to discuss this post, please contact **Jeremy Whittaker, Economic Regeneration Team Leader** on 01303 853375.

The closing date for applications is **4 March 2011**

Provisional Interview date is **18 March 2011**

Folkestone

To advertise in this section

01303 817040

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Register your details and we'll email you daily with new jobs that match your selected criteria

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Bradstow School

Teachers do amazing things

If you would like to join them, we are confident that you will find it the most satisfying job you have ever undertaken.

Bradstow is an exciting and unique residential school for children between the ages of 5 & 19, set in 13 acres of parkland just a few hundred metres from the sandy beaches of Broadstairs. We seek to meet the needs of children with autism and severe learning difficulties, many of whom have associated challenging behaviours. We have achieved international recognition for Leadership, supporting our people and for our developments in Communication and Behaviour Management.

Contra-intuitively, experience, whilst helpful is not essential. What makes the difference at Bradstow are the professional and personal qualities of the people who work here. What you, as an individual have to offer these complex but absolutely fascinating young people who attend our school.

You will be provided with an extended and on-going package of training and support that is second to none, starting with a non-contact induction programme of at least three weeks. We believe that staff training and development, together with the other staff support mechanisms in place, are essential in our specialised field and are at the core of the success of the school.

All our teachers and most other contact staff, are fully trained and supported in Gentle Teaching, TEACCH, Prospect Positive Behaviour Support, PECS and other Augmentative Communication Systems, as well as being provided with a wide range of other specialist skills. You will also be encouraged and supported to extend your skills and knowledge by undertaking further Degree and Diploma studies.

In addition to judging Bradstow 'Outstanding' in all appropriate categories, OFSTED 2009 said,

"The curriculum and the quality of teaching and support are exceptional"
"It is to the tremendous credit of a highly skilled and well-qualified team of teachers and support staff that they enable pupils to overcome and cope with the substantial learning and emotional barriers that they face"
"Bradstow is a very complex organization and a centre of excellence in its own field"

If you would like to join our team, and help us to continue to transform the lives of these children and their families, give us a call. Be in no doubt, the work is not easy and you will need to be committed to the needs of the child and the school. In return we offer a highly rewarding and satisfying career, which will both enskill and prepare you for senior and/or specialist leadership Posts as your career develops, with quite a bit of fun thrown in as well!

For SEN specialists, the second SEN point may be available.

For an application form and information pack please call 01843 608727 (24 hour recruitment answer machine), or email personnel@bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk

Please note that CV's will not be considered.

Applications should be received by 4pm, Friday 11th March 2011.

Healthy School

www.bradstow.wandsworth.sch.uk

THANET COLLEGE

RAISING ASPIRATIONS - DEVELOPING SKILLS - DELIVERING QUALITY

LECTURER IN CARPENTRY AND JOINERY

Salary scale: **£25,589-£30,205 for 37 hours per week all year**

A lecturer is required to deliver high quality education and training, to support students and trainees effectively (including individual and group tutorials), and to further develop the wood occupations curriculum.

Job reference: **LCJ001**
Closing date: **Wednesday 2nd March 2011**
Interview date: **23rd March 2011**

TROWEL TRADES TECHNICIAN

Salary scale: **£7,990-£8,896 for 18.5 hours per week all year**

The college is looking to recruit a Trowel Trades Technician to provide support and assistance to staff and students in the workshops as appropriate.

Job reference: **TTT001**
Closing date: **Wednesday 18th March 2011**

JOBS BROKER

Salary Scale: **£22,289 - £26,408 for 37 hours per week, all year**
FIXED TERM UNTIL 30 SEPTEMBER 2011

The college is looking to recruit to the above post to provide a job brokerage function for projects in the College.

Job reference: **JB001**
Closing date: **Wednesday 2nd March 2011**
Interview date: **14th March 2011**

For further details and to apply online please visit our website www.thanet.ac.uk and click on 'Vacancies'.
Alternatively contact the HR Office, Thanet College, Ramsgate Road, Broadstairs, Kent, CT10 1PN or telephone our application line for an application pack on (01843) 605052.

Promoting Equality Preventing Discrimination

INVESTORS IN PEOPLE | Bronze — matrix — EMPLOYMENT SOLUTIONS

Jobs for Kent continues on page 59...

Career opportunities at MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone are seeking to appoint an outstanding individual in the following areas:

Hourly Paid Personal Tutor — *Ref: SESS10*

Hourly Rate: £12.06 - £15.54 (dependent on qualifications and experience)
Fixed Term Contract
Medway

As a Personal Tutor you will plan and deliver a full range of group tutorials to learners with a wide range of abilities. You will be able to work with minimum supervision and have experience of working in a coaching, mentoring or teaching capacity and be willing to undertake an appropriate teaching qualification.

Technician in Hair and Beauty — *Ref: M0296*

Salary: £15,453- £17,243 per annum
Fixed Term Maternity Cover
Medway

We are looking for an organised candidate to assist the smooth running of the Hair and Beauty department. Responsibilities will include providing technical support to staff and students and setting-up the classrooms as required. Experience in the industry would be advantageous.

***CLOSING DATE:* Wednesday 16 March 2011**

MidKent College and RBLI Employment Solutions are working in partnership to support disabled applicants. For assistance please contact RBLI on 0800783114 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk

For an application pack and further details visit www.midkent.ac.uk or e mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively you may contact Human Resources on 01634 383102.

The College is committed to safeguarding children and young people therefore any offer of employment will be subject to a CRB check.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

Action for Business College · Investors in Diversity · RBLI · MidKent College

Westlands Academies Trust

THE WESTLANDS SCHOOL &
THE WESTLANDS PRIMARY SCHOOL
Westlands Avenue, Sittingbourne, Kent ME10 1PF

Interested in a career in teaching and joining our Graduate Teacher Training Programme?

Westlands Academies Trust has vacancies for graduates who wish to undertake school-based teacher training, whilst receiving financial support. Professional help is given to successful applicants to enable them to begin teaching classes at the earliest appropriate opportunity.

Applications are invited from graduates who are interested in teaching Science or Design Technology at Secondary level, and in the Primary sector, all subjects in the curriculum.

Westlands Academies Trust has an excellent reputation for high quality training within a friendly and supportive environment. This is an excellent opportunity to acquire practical teaching experience under the guidance of highly skilled and dedicated professionals.

Application forms are available from the school or online. These should be returned with a CV and letter of application. CVs are not accepted without an application form.

Closing date: Wednesday 9 March 2011

Westlands Academies Trust is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to an enhanced CRB check.

Tel: 01795 477475 Fax: 01795 479461
Email: swa@westlands.kent.sch.uk
Executive Headteacher: Mr J Whitcombe MA
Westlands Academies Trust Company No 7344732

Find teaching jobs online



Register your details and we'll email you daily with new jobs that match your selected criteria

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To advertise in this section
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...**Jobs for Kent** continued from page 38

JobsforKent.co.uk
A selection of the 100s of Local Jobs online

Accountancy

Booke-Keeper/Account Administrator
Marden
Salary Competitive salary
To apply/more information:
Kindergarten
nicky.peckham@thekindergartens.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Catering, Hospitality

Chefs and Commis Chefs
Ramsgate
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
Belgian Cafe
culturia@hotmail.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Kitchen Manager
Canterbury
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
Old Buttermarket
applications@jobsforkent.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Child Care

Cover Supervisors
All over Kent
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
London Teaching Pool Ltd
kentteam@tltp.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Teachers
All Kent
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
London Teaching Pool Ltd
kentteam@tltp.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Construction, Architecture, Surveyors

Fencing Installers
South East Area
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
Pembury Group
applications@kosmedia.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Customer Service, Call Centre

Telesales
Maidstone
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
Theme Events
sjsainsbury@btconnect.com
Quoting Job Ref: REC500

Receptionist / Customer Service
Canterbury
Salary 14k
To apply/more information:
Canterbury Health Practice
monique@canterburyhealthpractice.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: Rec Aug10

Administrator and PA to Doctor
Canterbury
Salary 14k
To apply/more information:
Canterbury Health Practice
monique@canterburyhealthpractice.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: PA Aug10

Other

EARN AN INCREASING MONTHLY INCOME...
Kent
Salary TBC
Earn an increasing monthly income... Generous Payments. Free BMW Mini. Luxury Holidays. Company Porsche. 1,000s of people can earn a second income in their spare time, in partnership with the Utility Warehouse. YOU COULD TOO! Make money by saving people money. No experience necessary. Fantastic benefits! Find out more! Call 0800 781 2433. Get paid every month, for work you do once! www.minibills.co.uk Home phone, Mobile, Internet, Gas, Electricity ALL IN ONE SIMPLE BILL *Best Buy www.which.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Utility Warehouse
alanbarnett@telecomplus.org.uk
Quoting Job Ref: KOS

Public Sector, Social Services

Cover Supervisors
All over Kent
Salary Negotiable
To apply/more information:
London Teaching Pool Ltd
kentteam@tltp.co.uk
Quoting Job Ref: kos

Retail, Wholesale, Sales

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Earn an increasing monthly income... Generous Payments. Free BMW Mini. Luxury Holidays. Company Porsche. 1,000s of people can earn a second income in their spare time, in partnership with the Utility Warehouse. YOU COULD TOO! Make money by saving people money. No experience necessary. Fantastic benefits! Find out more! Call 0800 781 2433. Get paid every month, for work you do once! www.minibills.co.uk Home phone, Mobile, Internet, Gas, Electricity ALL IN ONE SIMPLE BILL. *Best Buy www.which.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Utility Warehouse
alanbarnett@telecomplus.org.uk
Quoting Job Ref: KOS

Scientific & Pharmaceutical, Research

3 - 6 month temp shift Chemist
North Kent
Salary c£14/hour plus retention bonus
Providing 12 hour, 7 day analytical service working 42 hour week 6am-6pm or 7am-7pm on flexible rota - Lone working weekends. Purpose of role is to ensure all assays/analysis are carried out to timelines according to H & legislation. Preparation,analysis and calibration of samples, solutions and equipment. Applicants require a deg in Analytical Chemistry/Chemistry with 2 - 3 years experience in OES, AA, ICP and Wet Chemical Analysis plus production / process experience.
To apply/more information:
Interpersonnel
jfk@interpersonnel.ltd.uk
Quoting Job Ref: 1724

PUBLIC NOTICE

PUBLIC NOTICE.

Notice is hereby given that the Faversham Hop Festival Ltd have applied for a new 'Time Limited' Premises Licence for Faversham Town Centre (Preston Street and Guildhall areas) covering the performance of live music, dance and Punch and Judy for the 21st. Annual Hop Festival on Saturday 3rd of September 2011 (0900 to 1700 hrs) and Sunday 4th September 2011 (0900 to 1700 hrs).

Faversham Hop Festival Ltd.
P.O.Box 266
Faversham, Kent, ME13 3AW

HIGHWAYS - District of Swale

BANISTER HILL & HEARTS DELIGHT, BORDEN (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

To allow BT access to an underground structure in the road, Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on Banister Hill & Hearts Delight, Borden, on or after 14 March 2011 for up to 3 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed between the junctions with Borden Lane and Hearts Delight Road.

The alternative route is via The Street, Pond Farm Road, Sutton Baron Road and Wrens Road.

It is planned the road will be closed between 9.30 am and 3.30 pm and re-opened outside these hours.

PRIORY ROAD, FAVERSHAM (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of works to install a new water meter and associated pipework, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Priory Road, Faversham, on or after 23 February 2011 for up to 8 days or until the works have been completed.

The alternative route is via Dark Hill And Davington Hill.

(VARIOUS ROADS, RODMERSHAM) (30 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2011

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposes to make the above named Orders under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called "the Act") and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act.

The effect of the proposed Order will introduce a 30 mph speed limit in Rodmersham on the following roads or lengths of road:

Green Lane	Stockers Hill
Fruiterers Close	Stockers Brow
Highsted Road	Cromers Road
Highsted Valley	Bottom Pond Road
Cheney Hill	Bottles Lane
Brownings Orchard	

A copy of the proposed Order, statement of the Council's reasons for proposing to make the Order, a map indicating the location and the effect and a copy of any other Orders which will be amended by the proposed Order may be examined at the Council Offices of Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent and at Kent County Council, Sessions House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send your grounds for your observations in writing to the Transport and Development Manager Kent Highway Services, Ashford Highway Depot, Javelin Way, Henwood Industrial Estate, Ashford, TN24 8AD or by email to td.eastkent@kent.gov.uk by 12 noon on 17 March 2011.

(VARIOUS ROADS, BREDGAR, SWALE) (30 MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2011

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposes to make the above named Orders under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called "the Act") and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act.

The effect of the proposed Order will introduce a 30 mph speed limit on the following roads or lengths of road:

Bredgar Road	from the junction with Rockery Close for a distance of 420 metres in an easterly direction and 220 metres in a westerly direction to the existing 30 mph terminal.
Swanton Street	from the junction with Bashford Lane for a distance of 475 metres in a southerly direction and 375 metres in a northerly direction to the existing 30 mph speed limit terminal points.

A copy of the proposed Order, statement of the Council's reasons for proposing to make the Order, a map indicating the location and the effect and a copy of any other Orders which will be amended by the proposed Order may be examined at the Council Offices of Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent and at Kent County Council, Sessions House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send your grounds for your observations in writing to the Transport and Development Manager Kent Highway Services, Ashford Highway Depot, Javelin Way, Henwood Industrial Estate, Ashford, TN24 8AD or by email to td.eastkent@kent.gov.uk by 12 noon on 17 March 2011.

Katherine Kerswell, Group Managing Director
County Hall, Maidstone

For further information please contact Kent Highway services on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

Kent County Council
Inclusive Design and Placemaking
Supplementary Appendix to Kent Design Guide
Notice of Public Participation
Planning & Compulsory Purchase Act (2004)

Statutory Instrument No.2204 Town & Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004, amended 2008 - Regulation 17

Developed collaboratively between Kent County Council, Maidstone Borough Council and Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, Inclusive Design and Placemaking (hereinafter Inclusive Design) supports the Kent Design Guide (KDG) by providing specific detail and technical guidance on how to address accessibility for all in Kent's future built environment.

It is intended Inclusive Design will ultimately be adopted by Kent County Council as Supplementary Planning Guidance to the KDG. As such, the document will act as a reference point for developers and their landscape, urban design and planning consultants at an early stage in the planning process, as well as a key reference tool for County, Unitary and District Authorities who are responsible for good quality design of the public realm in Kent.

Inclusive Design applies specifically to the public realm, including arrival at a building or public space. The guidance can facilitate how planners consider access issues early on in their pre-planning application discussions, and can help those determining planning applications to ensure proposed new developments meet specific design standards. Inclusive Design also provides links to relevant legislation, standards, guidance and best practice case studies, to ensure that a more comprehensive approach to accessibility is considered during the early stages of design and development. An Access Audit & Technical Guidance Toolkit has also been produced, to be read alongside the draft Inclusive Design document.

The Draft Inclusive Design document can be viewed online and downloaded from Kent County Council's website at www.kent.gov.uk/inclusivedesignandplacemaking and is available for public inspection at Sessions House, County Hall, Maidstone. Copies will also be made available for inspection at all libraries and gateways from Monday to Friday during normal opening hours.

Any person or organisation may make representations on the document, which will be considered before adoption. Those wishing to make comments are encouraged to use the Council's web-based consultation system or the comments forms available with inspection copies of the documents and on the Council's website.

Representations relating to the draft Inclusive Design document can be returned as follows:

(1) Online using the Council's web-based consultation system at: www.kent.gov.uk/inclusivedesignandplacemaking

(2) By email to: kdconsultation@kent.gov.uk

(3) By post to: The Project Support Team (Inclusive Design & Placemaking), Regeneration & Economy Division, Chief Executive's Department, KCC, 2nd floor, Invicta House, Maidstone, Kent, Me14 1XX.

Only representations that are made in writing (including electronically) and arrive at the addresses or the sites specified above within the six-week period from 28 February 2011 to 11 April 2011 will have the right to be considered.

Representations may be accompanied by a request to be notified at a specific address when the Inclusive Design& Placemaking document is adopted.

Kent Design Initiative, Chief Executive's Directorate, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone ME14 1XX.

HIGHWAYS - District of Canterbury

B2068 STONE STREET, PETHAM, CANTERBURY (40 MPH SPEED LIMIT) TEMPORARY ORDER
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

For the safety of the public and workforce during water mains replacement works, Kent County Council has made an Order to impose a Temporary Mandatory Speed Limit of 40 mph on B2068 Stone Street, Petham, Canterbury, on or after 28 February 2011 for up to 12 weeks or until the works have been completed.

The section of road affected is between the junction with Chequers Hill and the existing 40 mph / National Speed Limit to the south east of the junction with Chartham Downs Road, when the relevant signs are displayed on site.

HIGHWAYS - District of Dover

AGESTER LANE, DENTON (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Because of the installation of a new electrical supply, Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Agester Lane, Denton, on or after 28 February 2011 for up to 5 days or until the works have been completed.

The road will be closed in the vicinity of Meg's Dean.

The alternative route is via Snode Hill, A260 Canterbury Road, Reece Lane, Golden Hill, Vershall Lane, Bunkers Hill and Agester Lane.

HIGHWAYS - District of Sevenoaks

COOPERS LANE, PENSHURST - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Coopers Lane, Penshurst for 500m from Hamsell Oast in a south westerly direction.

The Order will become effective on 28th February 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to commence 4th March 2011 and last 3 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Poundsbridge Hill and Coopers Lane.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate carriageway patching and kerb installation.

BRASTED LANE, KNOCKHOLT - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Brasted Lane, Knockholt between Stoneings Lane and Main Road.

The Order will become effective on 28th February 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 5 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Stoneings Lane and Main Road.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate installation of a replacement pole and transfer of power cables.

HIGH STREET, EYNSFORD - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on High street, Eynsford between Priory Lane and Bower Lane.

The Order will become effective on 28th February 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 2 nights between 21.00 – 05.00 hours. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: A225 Eynsford Road, A20 to Wrotham, A227 Borough Green Road/Wrotham Road, Western Road, A25 to Sevenoaks and A225 to Eynsford.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate installation of high friction surfacing and carriageway markings.

GRANVILLE ROAD, SEVENOAKS - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Granville Road, Sevenoaks from its junction with London Road to the boundary of Granville Court.

The Order will become effective on 14th March 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 8 weeks. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Gordon Road, Argyle Road, London Road and Tubs Hill.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate working space for the construction of a new highway retaining structure.

BILLET HILL, ASH-CUM-RIDLEY - (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council intends to make an Order restricting the use by vehicular traffic on Billet Hill, Ash-Cum-Ridley between Fawkham Green Road to Ash Road.

The Order will become effective on 14th March 2011, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months; the works are planned to last 5 days. These restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative route for the above restriction will be via: Crowhurst Lane, A20 London Road, Ash Lane, South Ash Road and The Street.

The purpose of the closure is to facilitate BT works.

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Maidstone

(STILEBRIDGE LANE, LINTON)(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC)TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Stilebridge Lane Linton on or after Tuesday 15th March Monday 2011 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route is via Butt Green Lane onto Linton Hill, Staplehurst Road, Forge Lane then onto Lower Farm Road

South East Water Services apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to provide a water connection to a property. Should you require any further information the Kent Highway Services contact is Lee Mcarthy on 0773485456

HIGHWAYS - Borough of Tonbridge and Malling

(BASTED LANE, BOROUGH GREEN)(PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2011
THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Basted Lane outside of Landway Farm on or after Monday 28th February 2011 for a period of up to 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route is via Winfield Lane, Bourne Lane, Dux Hill, Dux Lane, Long Mill Lane, Basted Lane.

BT Openreach apologise for any inconvenience caused by these works, which are necessary to enable duct installation. Should you require any further information for these works, the contact is Kenton Stewart on 01795 435729.

KATHERINE KERSWELL, Group Managing Director
Kent County Council, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent ME14 2XQ

For further information please contact Kent Highway services on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

Public Notice

I Benoy Sebastian are applying for a new Premises License at the Pioneer Food Land, 9 Canterbury Street, Gillingham, ME7 5TP. My application is made to Medway Council, Gun Wharf, Dock Road, Chatham, Kent ME4 4TR. I am applying for the following licensable activities Sale of Alchohol (7am – 11pm, Monday – Sunday)

Should you make representations to the Council it must be in writing and/or you can view my application by contacting the Council on 01634 337107 or 377108 by 17th March 2011.

It is an offence to knowingly or recklessly to make a false statement in connection with an application. A person guilty of an offence under this section is liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £5,000.

GOODS VEHICLE OPERATOR'S LICENCE

Sarwan Singh trading as Punjab Cash and Carry Ltd of Unit 3, Railway Street Industrial Estate, Railway Street, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 1YA, is applying to change an existing license as follows:

To keep an extra 2 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at the operating centre at Unit 3 Railway Street Industrial Estate, Railway Street, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 1YQ

To add an operating centre to keep 3 goods vehicles and 0 trailers at Unit 3 Railway Street Industrial Estate, Railway Street, Gillingham, Kent, ME7 1YG

Owners or occupiers of land (including buildings) near the operating centre(s) who believe that their use or enjoyment of that land would be affected,

should make written representations to the Traffic Commissioner at VOSA, Hillcrest House, 386 Hare Hill Lane, Leeds, LS9 6NF stating their reasons, within 21 days of this notice. Representors must at the same time send a copy of their representations to the applicant at the address given at the top of this notice.A Guide to making representations is available from the Traffic Commissioner's Office.

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Town and Country Planning Acts

The Council is required to give notice of the following applications

11/00221/FUL Flat 2 3A Nevill Park, Broadwater
- Blocking existing doorway on east elevation and replacing the windows (5) on part of north elevation with windows and french doors (CA)

11/00333/HOUSE Little Manor Staplehurst Road, Frittenden
- Replace existing glazed roof to conservatory with Cedar shingles and replace white with black guttering (as rest of house) (LB)

11/00335/LBC Little Manor Staplehurst Road, Frittenden
- Listed Building Consent- Replace existing glazed roof to conservatory with Cedar shingles and replace white with black guttering (as rest of house); Remove modern sliding door seperating conservatory from main house (LB)

11/00375/HOUSE The Old Rectory The Street, Frittenden
- Detached double garage and woodstore (CA)

11/00388/LBC Shearnfold Farmhouse Church Road, Goudhurst
- Listed Building Consent: Proposed single storey rear extension and window/roof alterations (LB)

11/00351/LBC Hayle Oast Marle Place Road, Horsmonden
- Listed Building Consent: Minor alterations and improvements, including reinstating original features (LB)

11/00274/HOUSE 57 Broadwater Down Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks
- Demolition of part ground floor and roof to chalet bungalow, construct two-storey side and rear extensions (CA)

11/00275/CAC 57 Broadwater Down Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks
- Conservation Area Consent - Demolition of part ground floor and roof to chalet bungalow (CA)

11/00357/HOUSE 23 Claremont Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Pantiles & St Marks
- Single storey flat roof extension to side elevation. Cladding of external front and rear walls with featheredged weatherboarding (CA)

11/00244/HOUSE 8 Lansdowne Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Park
- Extension to rear conservatory (CA)

11/00377/FUL 62 Mount Pleasant Road Royal Tunbridge Wells, Park
- Extension of Time: Provision of roof extension and alterations to increase the number of self-contained residential flats from two to seven, including change of use of first floor area from ancillary offices to residential use (TW/07/04478/FUL refers) (CA)

11/00339/FUL Albans Barn Yard Romford Road, Pembury
- Change of use and conversion of barn to part holiday let and part family annex (LB)

11/00336/FUL Johnson Of Sandhurst Back Road, Sandhurst
- Replacement shopfront (CA) (LB)

11/00379/FUL St Nicholas Church Church Road, Sandhurst
- Extension of Time - (Land adjacent) Change of use of land for extension of churchyard (TW/08/00987 refers) (LB)

11/00349/TELN5 STREET RECORD London Road, Southborough And High Brooms
- Telecommunication Notification: A 12.5m high replica telegraph pole, 1no shared equipment cabinet, 1no slimline meter cabinet and development ancillary thereto (CA)

(DEVPLN) Departure from the Development Plan (PROW) Affecting A Public Right of Way (CA) Affecting a Conservation Area (LB) Affecting a Listed Building (MAJOR) Major Applications (MAST) Mast Applications (EIA) Applications Accompanied by an EIA Statement.

You may view these applications on our website (www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk), at the The Old Fire Station, Stone Street, Cranbrook or at Gateway, 8 Grosvenor Road, Tunbridge Wells.

We accept comments online, by email to planningcomments@tunbridgewells.gov.uk or in writing to the address below. Comments should be made within 21 days from the date of this notice, although we may accept them after this date. You should quote the reference and be aware that we make all comments available for inspection, placing them on the file and publishing them on the internet. We do not publish signatures, telephone numbers or email addresses on the internet.

Jim Kehoe
Head of Planning Services
Town Hall Royal Tunbridge Wells TN1 1RS

Dated: 26 February 2011

Tunbridge Wells Borough Council



Ford's new Focus looks set to take on the world

First **Drive**

by

IAIN DOOLEY

Ford **Focus**

EVEN if you don't claim to be a car enthusiast, it would be hard to ignore that the Focus has been a huge hit for Ford. It has been an almost permanent fixture at the top of the sales charts since its original launch, and been the benchmark others have been judged by ever since.

So what's new? In a nutshell, everything. Now positioned as a 'world car' within Ford, this Focus will be sold around the globe. That brings economies of scale, and is one reason why the car can be had with a range of good value optional equipment packages, such as an impressive safety kit bundle.

There's also a greater emphasis on economy and emissions, with the range kicking off with a 109g/km diesel and the promise of more to come in the future. Engine stop-start technology plus the use of Ford's new EcoBoost petrol engines and fuel-sipping DSG Powershift gearboxes add to Ford's frugal approach to motoring.

It's not a hair shirt experience, though. In keeping with other recent new Fords, the Focus is a polished performer inside and out. Visually this third-generation car boasts a more streamlined and slippery profile. Inside, there's an equally high quality approach to fixtures and fittings.

The cabin is noticeably driver-centric, with the car's major controls close to hand. There's also no shortage of information available to the driver, what with a pair of clear electronic displays – one for the audio unit and one between the main dials.

Fans of the old car will feel right at home thanks to a familiar feel to the various types of switchgear. Newcomers will be faced by a more upbeat and engaging experience than what's available in some rivals, as the overall cabin ambience is lighter and brighter than the traditional German opposition.

It takes more than a cursory glance around the cabin to fully appreciate the lengths Ford has gone to in order to maintain its class-leading status. The same is true out on the road as, initially, the experience appears to have shifted considerably more towards comfort. What has Ford done with the car's sporty and engaging character?

In truth it never left, only this time it's been cleverly contained in a more refined and composed wrapper. Push a little harder in a corner and you'll soon experience some of the old Focus magic. Everything is so darn polished now – Volkswagen and the like should be worried.

Considerable praise should also be directed towards the engine department. Ford is offering 1.6 and 2.0-litre engines in both petrol and diesel, in a range of power outputs. In petrol guise there's a choice of 105, 125 and 150 horsepower, while diesels run from 115 to 140 and 163 horsepower.

Flexible

Predictably, the highest output diesel motor scores well if you plan on racking up the miles. Its flexible nature makes light work of long distances, and its six-speed manual gearbox can be swapped for a DSG-style auto if you wish.

Ford's petrol motors have improved beyond all recognition in recent years. As a willing, free-revving alternative to the more frugal diesel units, such engines prove ideal for shorter, stop-start journeys and boast less weight, which further enhances the car's agility.

As the old saying goes, power is nothing without control, and the Focus isn't short of systems to keep you and the car in check. Apart from the predictable abundance of airbags this Focus can be had with some interesting Volvo-esque features, which shouldn't be a surprise considering the two were once very close.

Packaged as a bundle of features, you get a blind spot warning, lane departure alert, city speed auto braking function and a speed limit sign reader that displays the relevant information in the electronic fascia readout. It was only a few short years ago that such technology was the preserve of expensive luxury cars, and makes the inclusion in a 'regular' family hatch a big deal. You can thank Ford's economies of scale approach for the decision, and look forward to more of the same in the years to come with other new Fords.

Make no mistake; this Focus is a supremely competent and attractive car.

It might take a few minutes – and a few miles behind the wheel – to fully appreciate the progress made by Ford's engineers, but when you do you'll be pleasantly surprised by what's been achieved.

The combination of big-car refinement and equipment levels, a rounded and polished driving experience and an engine range offering real-world savings are just a few of the many highlights. Even in uncertain times, if its performance is anything to go by this Focus is destined to be another chart topper.

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05 55 FORD FOCUS 1.8 TDCI GHIA EST, 6sp, 2 owners, FSH, a/c, ABS, PAS, e/w, CD, alloys, in silver £4,695
07 07 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.7 CTDI CLUB EST, 1 Owner, FSH, AC, Cruise, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EM, CD, Met Silver £4,495
04 04 FORD MONDEO 2.0 TDCI GHIA EST, 6sp, 2 owners, 81,000 miles, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Alloys, in Pepper Red £3,995

SALOONS, SPORTS & PRESTIGE

06 06 SAAB 9-3 2.0 VECTOR SEMI-AUTO 175 BHP 2dr CONVERTIBLE, 1 Owner, 55k, FDSH, A/C, ABS, PAS, Cruise, R/C/Locking, Immob, E/W, CD, E/Hood, Leather, Alloys in Parchment Silver £7,295
05 05 VAUXHALL ASTRA 2.0 BERTONE TURBO CONVERTIBLE, 28,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, Cruise, RCL, Immob, EW, Htd Seats, Alloys, Peacock Blue £6,995
04 04 SUBARU IMPREZA 2.0 WRX TURBO, AWD, 4dr, 71,000 miles, FDSH, a/c, r/c/locking, immob, ABS, PAS, e/w, CD, fogs, alloys, in met blue £6,695
02 52 MERCEDES C230K 1.8 COUPE 2 dr, 94k, fsh, a/c, cruise, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, panoramic s/roof, e/w, CD, htd seats, leather, alloys, in silver £6.495
0606 FORD FOCUS 2.0 TDCI GHIA 4dr, 6sp, 2 owners, 97k, FSH, a/c, e/w, ABS, PAS, cruise, r/c/locking, immob, CD, alloys, in met blue £4,695
02 52 PEUGEOT 206 1.6 COUPE CONVERTIBLE, 59,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, ER, EW, CD, Leather, Alloys, Met Blue £4,295

HATCHBACKS

08 08 SEAT LEON 1.9 TDI REFERENCE 5dr, 1 owner, 48,000 miles, FSH, a/c, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, in silver £7,995
05 55 VAUXHALL SIGNUM 3.0 CDTI DESIGN 5dr, 6sp, 60k, FDSH, a/c, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, fogs alloys, in met black £5,995
03 52 PEUGEOT 307 2.0 XSI 3dr, 63,000 miles, FSH, a/c, ABS. PAS, e/w, auto lights, 1/2 leather, alloys, in silver £5,495
07 56 Ford Mondeo 2.0 TDCi Edge 115BHP, 1 owner, 83k, FSH, ABS, PAS, A/C, RCL, E/W, CD, Alloy, in Met Green £4,695
07 57 FORD KA 1.3 STYLE 3dr, 1 owner, 37,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, CL, Immob, EW, Radio/CD, Drivers Airbag, Cloth Trim, White £3,995
02 02 VOLKSWAGEN GOLF 1.4 S 5dr, 2 owners, 45,000 miles, FSH, a/c, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, in silver £3,995
04 54 RENAULT CLIO 1.2 EXTREME 3 3dr, 54,000, FSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, s/roof, in black £3,695
04 54 VAUXHALL VECTRA 1.8 LIFE 5dr , 96,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, CBC, RCL, Immob, EW, EM, CD, Met Silver £3,495
04 54 RENAULT CLIO 1.2 16V EXTREME 3 3dr, 1 owner, 51,000 mls, FDSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, sunroof, CD, e/w, in silver £3,495
04 53 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.7 DTI LS 5dr, 76,000 miles, SH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, in Met Blue £3,295

COMMERCIALS

06 56 TOYOTA HI LUX 2.5 D-4D HL3 DC, 5 Seater, 1 Owner, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, EM, CD, Side Steps, Alloys, in Met Blue £9,995 +vat
08 57 MERCEDES SPRINTER 311 2.2 CDI LWB BOX VAN, 1 owner, 138,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, e/w, CD, tail lift, in white £9,995 +vat
08 57 MITSUBISHI L200 2.5 DI-D4 WORK, D/C, 1 owner, 80,000L, FSH, ABS, PAS, c/locking, immob, CD, r/d lock, in white £7,495 +vat
07 07 MITSUBISHI L200 2.5 DI-D 4 LIFE DOUBLE CAB, 1 owner 63,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, CL, Immob, EW, CD, Side steps. In white £7,495 +vat
07 57 MERCEDES VITO 109 2.2 CDI XTRA LONG VAN, 6sp, 1 owner, 111,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, CD, ply lined, in white £6,495 +vat
06 56 MERCEDES VITO 109 2.2 CDI COMPACT SWB, 6sp, 2 Owneras, 64,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, ASR, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Twin Side Loading Drs, White £6,995 +vat
07 57 MERCEDES VITO 2.2 CDI 109 LWB, 3 seater, 6sp, 1 Owner, 117,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply Lined, Twin side loading drs, White £5,995 +vat
07 57 FORD TRANSIT 85 2.2D T280 SWB, 3 seater, 1 Owner, 104,000 miles, ABS, PAS, ESP, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply Lined, Side loading dr, White £5,495 +vat
07 07 FORD TRANSIT 100 2.4D T350 LWB, Semi High Roof, 3 seater, 1 owner, 117,000 miles, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, CD, Ply lined, CD, Side loading dr, White £5,495 +vat
07 57 FORD TRANSIT 85 2.2 TDCI T280 SWB, Semi High Roof, 3 seater, 1 owner, 103,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, Immobiliser in White £5,495 +vat
07 07 VAUXHALL ASTRA 1.9 CDTI SPORTIVE VAN, 6sp, 1 owner, 79k, FSH, A/C, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, Immob, E/W, Alloys, Met Silver £5,495 +vat
08 08 VAUXHALL COMBO 1.3 CDTI 2000 CREW VAN, 5 Seater, 1 Owner, 61k, FSH, ABS, PAS, R/C/Locking, Immob, 2x Side Loading Doors, 1/2 ply lined, In White £4,995 +vat
07 07 PEUGEOT EXPERT 1.9D 815 70, 3 SEATER, 1 owner, 60,000 miles, FS, C/Locking, Immob, CD, Ply Lined in White £4,995 +vat
08 08 VAUXHALL ASTRAVAN 1.3 CDTI CLUB, 6 sp, 1 Owner, 73k, FSH, ABS, PAS, R/C/Locking, Immob, E/W, CD, In White £4,695 +vat
07 07 VAUXHALL ASTRAVAN 1.7 CDTI SPORTIVE, 6sp, 110,000 miles, FSH, A/C, ABS, PAS, R/C/L, E/W, Immobiliser, Alloys, CD in White £4,495 +vat
07 57 VAUXHALL COMBO 1.3 CDTI 1700 VAN, 1 owner, 76,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, ply lined, CD, in white £3,995 +vat
07 07 VAUXHALL COMBO 1.3 CDTI 2000 CREW VAN, 1 owner, 91,000 miles, FSH, ABS, PAS, r/c/locking, immob, 3 seat in rear, 1/2 ply lined, in white £3,995 +vat



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01 51 Volkswagen Golf 2.0 SE Auto est
Automatic, 83000 miles, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, EW, CD, Alloys, Twin Air Bags



07 57 Ford Focus 1.8 TDCi Style 5dr
1 Owner, 47,000 miles, FSH, AC, ABS, PAS, RCL, Immob, Computer, CD, Met Blue



05 55 Volkswagen Golf 1.4 S 5dr
Hatchback, Blue, Petrol 1390cc, 5-Speed, Manual, 58000 miles



02 52 Mercedes-Benz C Class C230 Kompressor SE Coupe
Aluminium Silver, Petrol 1796cc, Automatic 94000 miles

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FIRST GEAR



New Astra model trumps key rivals

VAUXHALL has announced a new Astra model, which the company claims squarely targets similarly-priced five-door hatch rivals from Ford and VW by offering levels of standard equipment and trim not usually seen outside the options list.

Starting at £18,110 for the 1.4-litre Turbo model, the ES Tech comes as standard with a sat-nav system (including CD player, MP3, USB, iPod control, seven speakers and aux-in socket), Bluetooth, a DAB radio, 17ins alloy wheels and air-con.

This complements the already generous level of standard equipment found in most Astra models, such as curtain airbags, ESP, daytime running lights, cruise control and steering wheel-mounted audio controls.

This is, according to Vauxhall, bad news for the Astra's rivals. Compared with the £800 more expensive VW Golf 1.4 TSI Match, the Astra ES Tech 1.4 Turbo gains sat-nav, in addition to offering an extra 18 horsepower.

For diesel buyers, the Astra ES Tech is available with the 125 horsepower 1.7 CDTi engine, and with sub-120g/km emissions this version is one of Vauxhall's growing range of ecoFLEX models.

Nissan takes the wait off



DUE TO the unprecedented demand for its Juke, Qashqai and Qashqai+2 models, Nissan has taken an innovative step to ensure customers are happy – and mobile – while waiting for their new car to arrive.

The company will be offering a free loan car for buyers facing a delivery lead time of more than three months to tide them over until their new Nissan arrives.

Customers ordering a new Juke will be offered use of a Micra, while Qashqai and Qashqai+2 buyers will be offered the use of a Note, completely free of charge. Even insurance cover is included, subject to normal terms and conditions.

Little Kia could save you a lot

JANUARY'S VAT rise may have added extra costs to buying a new car, but Kia can save the cost-conscious motorist more than 20 per cent.

Kia has extended its popular seven-year switch programme and upped the savings by £500 on selected models to £2,000.

For customers with a seven-year-old car, with a maximum of 100,000 miles, they can now swap their old banger for either a new Picanto 1.0 '1' from just £5,370, or a wider choice from the Rio range from just £6,540. To qualify the vehicle must have been first registered in the UK on or before June 30, 2004

But for those with no car to trade-in, the Rio range is available from just £7,995 for the Rio 1.4 '1', or from £8,995 for the highly-equipped Rio 1.4 Domino which comes with 15ins alloys, front fog lights, premium upholstery, leather steering wheel, air-conditioning, six airbags and ESC.





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Vehicle shown is an Orlando 2.0 VCDi LTZ with metallic paint at an extra cost of £410, and an Executive Pack at an optional cost of £2,000. Available at participating Dealers only. Not available in conjunction with any other offers. Available on UK supplied vehicles. Prices correct at time of press.
Official Government Environment Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). Orlando range: Urban - 29.1 (9.7) – 35.8 (7.9), Extra-urban - 47.9 (5.9) – 57.7 (4.9), Combined - 38.7 (7.3) – 47.1 (6.0). CO_2 emissions 186 - 159g/km.

by STEVELOADER

Saab Independence Day celebrates great escape

SAAB dealers are celebrating the first anniversary of the Swedish icon's rebirth by inviting motorists to an exclusive Independence event over this weekend, concluding on Monday.

It is one year since American car giant General Motors (GM) sold Saab Automobile to Dutch supercar marque Spyker, sparking a fanfare worthy of the great escapologist Houdini.

For GM had all but given up hope of finding a buyer for what it regarded as a loss-making basket case and had closed production at Saab's Trollhatten plant – the ailing patient's life support had been switched off.

But an 11th hour resuscitation was assembled and, one year on, all the vital signs of the old pre-GM Saab – a byword for automotive innovation – are showing once more and with a hint of mischief in choosing 'Independence Day' to underline its first birthday since escaping the clutches of the American GM colossus.

Glyn Williams, dealer principal at Canterbury Saab said: "Saab has come a long way in the last 12 months and here at Canterbury Saab it has been exciting to watch the company grow as we've launched a series of new products including the all-new Saab 9-5 Saloon and the new 9-3 low emissions engines.

"We've got many loyal Saab customers in Canterbury and we wanted to say 'thank you' by giving them the opportunity to take advantage of some truly exclusive deals over Independence weekend."

Visitors to Saab dealerships can benefit from new finance offers including a £2,500 trade-in allowance and zero per cent finance, whilst Saab customers will be offered a free visual health check for their vehicle.



UPDATED: New SportWagon is expected to take more than half of the Saab 9-5 sales in the UK when it arrives later this year

Dealers are also offering 2010 approved used Saabs at keen prices and customers who buy any vehicle until the end of February are entered into a competition to try to win back the price they pay for their new Saab.

Since forming an independent company with Spyker, Saab has quickly pressed ahead with new products: the eagerly awaited Saab 9-5 SportWagon – expected to account for more than half of all 9-5 sales – arrives soon followed by the luxurious Saab 9-4X, Saab's first ever crossover vehicle.

The compact executive 9-3 range, which includes saloon, SportWagon and all-wheel drive 9-3X, and Convertible, has also been updated and the line-up streamlined for the 2011 model year. Most noticeable is the sleeker front end and 'ice block' headlight array.



SHARP: Independence strictly limited edition Convertible highlights the sleeker front end revisions to the Saab 9-3 compact executive range – note the new 'ice block' headlight array

Looking ahead, Saab has already formed partnerships with other leading innovators, including an agreement with BMW to supply petrol engines for next generation Saab models.

Saab was founded in 1937 as an aircraft manufacturer; its first car was unveiled 10 years later. The car division was then created as a separate entity in 1990, jointly owned by the Saab Scania Group and General Motors, before becoming a wholly-owned GM subsidiary in 2000.

But the marriage never really worked, with Saab's famed individualism submerged and the brand's diehard fans eventually voted with their feet. Newly independent, the pressure is now on for Saab to win back former fans and recruit new ones.

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auto/man, 62000 with full S/H, unique mauve colour with matching interior ~~£5495~~ £4995



2004 Mercedes C180 Kompressor
4 dr saloon, silver/black leather, facelift model, auto/man with full S/H..... ~~£7995~~ £7495



1998 BMW Z3 2.8 Manual
blue with black electric hood. Wide wheel arch model, 77K CD Radio ~~£4,995~~ £3995



2003 SUZUKI GRAND VITARA 2.7 XL7 Manual
silver, 66k, 1 owner from new ~~£4,495~~ £3,995

GENERAL CARS

2004 MERCEDES C180 KOMPRESSOR, 4 dr saloon, silver/black leather, facelift model, auto/man with full S/H ~~£7,995~~ £7,495
2001 BMW 320CI (individual) 62k, very rare, auto/manual ~~£5,495~~ £4,995
2003 SUZUKI GRAND VITARA 2.7 XL7 Manual, silver, 66k, 1 owner from new ~~£4,495~~ £3,995
2006 CITROEN XSARA PICASSO 5 dr 5 seat MPV, manual, 40K with history, silver ~~£4,495~~ £3,995
2004 PEUGEOT 607 4 door saloon, 2.0 HDI Diesel, manual, silver, luxury & economy only ~~£3,995~~ £3,495
2001 ROVER 75 CDT TOURER ESTATE DIESEL (BMW engine model) silver, manual, new pirelli P60 tyres all round £2,495
2001 PEUGEOT 206 1.4 LX 3 dr hatch in black, low tax & insurance, always popular with younger drivers . SOLD £1,995
2002 ROVER 45 1.6 5 dr hatchback, low mileage, blue, manual, taxed and MOT'd, E/W, PAS..... £1,795
1999 VW GOLF 1.6 SE 5 SP MANUAL, green, 5 dr hatch, e/w, PAS, A/C with 1 year MOT + 6 mths tax ~~£1,995~~ £1,795
2001 CITROEN SAXO VTR, 3 door sports hatchback, metallic red, all usual electric extras, tax and MoT. Lovely condition..... ~~£1,995~~ £1,795
1999 FORD FOCUS 1.4 CL 5 dr hatch, alloys, blue, manual, ever popular low tax and insurance model ~~£1,795~~ £1,495
2000 VAUXHALL CORSA 1.0 GLS 12V 3 dr hatchback, met purple, blue/grey interior, PAS, C/L, E/W, Sunroof, Grp 3 insurance and low tax SOLD £1,495
2000 FORD KA2 COLLECTION, 1.3 manual, blue, SOLD E/W, PAS, C/L, 82k with history.. ~~£1,695~~ £,1295
2001 HYUNDAI ACCENT 1.5 CDX 5 dr hatchback, Silver, manual, all extras, e/w, pas, c/l, etc. ~~£1,495~~ £,1195

Get ready for Spring! Take a look at our CONVERTIBLES

1998 BMW Z3 2.8 manual, blue with black elec roof, alloys, wide wheel arch model ~~£4,995~~ £3,995
1999 SAAB 9-3 Convertible Automatic, Green with beige leather, only two owners from new and FSH, 60,000 miles, CD/radio £1,995
2002 MGTF "cool blue" convertible, silver with black hard top and alloys, 41000k..... ~~£3,295~~ £2,995
2000 VW GOLF CABRIOLET, 1.6 manual, bright red with black electric roof..... ~~£2,495~~ £1,995
2001 MGTF 1.8 Manual, silver with black hood, CD Radio, alloys, 68K..... £1,995

P/X BARGAINS

2000 PEUGEOT 106 GTi 1600, 3 door hatch, red, alloys, really quick £1,995
2001 VAUXHALL OMEGA 2.2 AUTO, silver, 4 door, alloys, tax & mot £1,795
1999 RENAULT MEGANE 1.6 RT SPORT, red, alloys, e/w, PAS, 1 years mot..... £795
1999 DAEWOO NUBIRA ESTATE CDX AUTO, blue SOLD..... £795
1997 TOYOTA CARINA E, 5 door hatch, blue, manual £695
1999 FORD MONDEO 2.0Si 5 dr hatchback, silver, manual, MOT, £695
1998 VW POLO 1.4L 3 dr hatch in blue, 1 yr MOT..... £495
2001 HYUNDAI ACCENT 1.3i 3 dr hatchback, in blue, 1 yr MOT..... £495

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2010(10) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 4000 miles £17,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELITE CDTI TURBO MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles £16,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 950 miles £15,995
2010(60) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A160 CLASSIC SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, MOUNTAIN GREY, 1610 miles £13,995
2010(60) NISSAN CUBE KAIZEN 5DR HATCH AUTO, WHITE, 1000 miles £12,995
2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 2000 miles £12,995
2010(60) PEUGEOT 308 S 5DR HATCH AUTO, ABYSS BLUE, 750 miles £10,995
2009(09) FORD FOCUS ZETEC 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles £10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL MERIVA DESIGN 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles £10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles £10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA EXCLUSIV AC 5DR HATCH AUTO, GOLD, 6000 miles £9,995
2010(10) RENAULT GRAND MODUS DYNAMIQUE VVT 5DR HATCH AUTO, OTTOMON BLUE, 1000 miles £9,995
2009(59) NISSAN NOTE VISIA MPV AUTO, GREY, 1800 miles £9,995
2010(10) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1800 miles £9,995
2010(60) RENAULT MODUS GRAND DYNAMIQUE VVT 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 250 miles £9,995
2010(10) NISSAN MICRA TEKNA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 6000 miles £9,995
2010(10) PEUGEOT 207 S 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 7000 miles £9,495
2010(10) FIAT PUNTO EVO DYNAMIC DUALOGIC 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 500 miles £9,495
2009(59) SUZUKI SWIFT GLX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 450 miles £9,495
2009(09) VAUXHALL AGILA DESIGN 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles £8,995
2009(59) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 1100 miles £6,495

CONVERTIBLES CABRIOLETS

2009(09) MERCEDES-BENZ CLK CLK200 KOMPRESSOR AVANTGARDE CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLACK, 20000 miles £23,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 307 S COUPE CABRIOLET COUPE AUTO, BLACK, 15000 miles £9,995
2009(58) NISSAN MICRA 25 CONVERTIBLE CC CONVERTIBLE AUTO, RED, 11000 miles £9,995
2006(56) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles £8,995
2006(06) RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles £7,995
2006(56) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, GOLD, 30000 miles £7,995

FIESTA

2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 2000 miles £12,995
2010(60) FORD FIESTA TITANIUM 3DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles £11,995
2009(58) FORD FIESTA STYLE PLUS 3DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles £8,995
2007(57) FORD FIESTA GHIA 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 16000 miles £6,995

FOCUS HATCH & SALOON

2009(09) FORD FOCUS ZETEC 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles £10,995
2008(58) FORD FOCUS STYLE 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 3000 miles £9,995
2008(08) FORD FOCUS ZETEC 3DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 4000 miles £8,995
2008(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 7000 miles £7,995
2007(57) FORD FOCUS ZETEC CLIMATE 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 19000 miles £6,995
2005(55) FORD FOCUS GHIA 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 27000 miles £6,495
2007(57) FORD FOCUS ZETEC CLIMATE 16V 3DR HATCH AUTO, TONIC BLUE, 21000 miles £5,995

FOCUS ESTATES

2007(57) FORD FOCUS STYLE ESTATE AUTO, GREY, 12000 miles £6,495

RENAULT SCENIC

2009(59) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE DCI FAP TURBO MPV AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles £16,995
2007(07) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 136 7STR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 8000 miles £8,995
2007(07) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 136 7STR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 15000 miles £8,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 5STR MPV AUTO, RED, 13000 miles £7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 5STR MPV AUTO, GREY, 10000 miles £7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 5STR MPV AUTO, GREY, 26000 miles £7,995
2007(07) RENAULT SCENIC PRIVILEGE VVT 111 5STR MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 20000 miles £7,995
2008(57) RENAULT SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 5STR MPV AUTO, BLUE, 19000 miles £6,995
2004(54) RENAULT SCENIC DYNAMIQUE 16V MPV AUTO, BLACK, 27000 miles £5,495

RENAULT

2007(57) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 136 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, GOLD, 12000 miles £10,995
2010(10) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1800 miles £9,995
2010(60) RENAULT MODUS GRAND DYNAMIQUE VVT 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 250 miles £9,995
2010(10) RENAULT GRAND MODUS DYNAMIQUE VVT 5DR HATCH AUTO, OTTOMON BLUE, 1000 miles £9,995
2006(56) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles £8,995
2008(08) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE VVT 136 7STR MPV AUTO, GREEN, 15000 miles £8,995
2006(56) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, GOLD, 30000 miles £7,995
2008(58) RENAULT KANGOO AUTHENTIQUE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 300 miles £7,995
2006(06) RENAULT MEGANE DYNAMIQUE VVT 111 CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles £7,995
2008(58) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, GREY, 1500 miles £7,495
2007(57) RENAULT MEGANE PRIVILEGE VVT 111 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 10000 miles £6,995
2006(56) RENAULT LAGUNA EXPRESSION SPORT TOURER 16V ESTATE AUTO, GREY, 8000 miles £6,995
2008(08) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, GREY, 12000 miles £6,995
2005(05) RENAULT KANGOO EXPRESSION 16V MPV AUTO, GREEN, 39000 miles £3,995

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2008(08) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 6000 miles £6,995
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2009(09) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles £6,995
2009(58) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX ESTATE AUTO, BLACK, 9000 miles £6,995
2009(59) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 1100 miles £6,495
2008(57) CHEVROLET KALOS SX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 18000 miles £5,495
2006(56) CHEVROLET LACETTI SX 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 15000 miles £4,995
2007(57) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles £4,995
2007(07) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 18000 miles £4,495
2007(07) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £4,495
2007(07) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 20000 miles £4,495

HYUNDAI

2008(58) HYUNDAI MATRIX COMFORT MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 10000 miles £7,495
2008(58) HYUNDAI GETZ GSI 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles £6,995
2009(59) HYUNDAI I10 COMFORT 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles £6,995
2007(57) HYUNDAI MATRIX GSI SALOON AUTO, BLACK, 12000 miles £5,995
2007(57) HYUNDAI ACCENT ATLANTIC LIMITED EDITION 3DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 6000 miles £5,995
2006(56) HYUNDAI GETZ CDX 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 9000 miles £5,995
2008(08) HYUNDAI AMICA CDX 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 24000 miles £5,995
2008(08) HYUNDAI AMICA CDX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles £5,995
2007(07) HYUNDAI MATRIX GSI MPV AUTO, BLACK, 15000 miles £5,495
2004(54) HYUNDAI GETZ GSI 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £3,995
2006(06) HYUNDAI AMICA CDX 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 18000 miles £3,995

KIA

2009(09) KIA CEED GS 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles £8,995

DAIHATSU

2008(08) DAIHATSU SIRION SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 13000 miles £7,995
2008(08) DAIHATSU SIRION SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 8000 miles £7,995
2007(57) DAIHATSU SIRION SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles £7,495
2007(07) DAIHATSU SIRION SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 16000 miles £6,995
2007(07) DAIHATSU SIRION 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 20000 miles £6,995

BMW

2009(59) BMW 3 SERIES 320I SE COUPE AUTO, BRONZE, 4000 miles £19,995

FIAT

2010(10) FIAT PUNTO EVO DYNAMIC DUALOGIC 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 500 miles £9,495
2007(56) FIAT PANDA ELEGANZA 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 25000 miles £4,995

FUSION

2010(10) FORD FUSION ZETEC 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1800 miles £9,995
2008(08) FORD FUSION FUSION + 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 13000 miles £7,995
2009(09) FORD FUSION FUSION + 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 16000 miles £7,495
2006(56) FORD FUSION ZETEC CLIMATE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles £5,995

CITROEN

2007(57) CITROEN C3 SX 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, DIABLO RED, 13000 miles £5,995

CORSA

2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles £10,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL CORSA EXCLUSIV AC 5DR HATCH AUTO, GOLD, 6000 miles £9,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 750 miles £9,495
2009(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 11000 miles £8,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 12000 miles £8,995
2009(09) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, ULTRA BLUE, 4000 miles £8,995
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles £8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA CLUB AC 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 9000 miles £8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 11000 miles £7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V 3DR HATCH AUTO, GOLD, 5000 miles £7,495
2005(54) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V 3DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 4000 miles £5,495
2003(53) VAUXHALL CORSA ELEGANCE 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 26000 miles £3,995
2001(51) VAUXHALL CORSA ELEGANCE 16V 3DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 34000 miles £2,995

MAZDA

2008(58) MAZDA 3 3 TAKARA 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 5000 miles £9,995
2008(08) MAZDA 3 3 TS2 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 17000 miles £8,995
2007(57) MAZDA 3 3 TS 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 8000 miles £7,995
2006(56) MAZDA 6 6 TS 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 21000 miles £7,995
2007(57) MAZDA 2 2 CAPELLA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 15000 miles £6,495
2007(56) MAZDA 2 2 S 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 17000 miles £5,995

SUZUKI

2009(59) SUZUKI SWIFT GLX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 450 miles £9,495
2009(59) SUZUKI SWIFT GLX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles £8,995
2007(57) SUZUKI SX4 GLX 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 21000 miles £7,495

TOYOTA

2007(57) TOYOTA PRIUS T SPIRIT VVT-I 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £12,995
2007(57) TOYOTA AURIS T SPIRIT VVT-I MM 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles £8,995
2007(07) TOYOTA AURIS T3 VVT-I MM 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 17000 miles £8,995
2007(07) TOYOTA COROLLA T3 VVT-I 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles £8,995
2008(08) TOYOTA YARIS T3 VVT-I 5DR HATCH AUTO, VENETIAN SILVER, 14000 miles £7,995
2005(05) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T SPIRIT VVT-I MPV AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 9000 miles £7,995
2005(54) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T SPIRIT VVT-I MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 9000 miles £7,495
2005(55) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 5000 miles £7,495
2005(05) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I 3DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 12000 miles £6,995
2007(07) TOYOTA YARIS T3 VVT-I MM 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 21000 miles £6,995
2004(54) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 1750 miles £6,995
2005(55) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I 3DR HATCH AUTO, CRYSTAL SILVER, 5000 miles £6,995
2005(M) TOYOTA YARIS VERSO T3 VVT-I MPV AUTO, CHAMPAGNE, 25000 miles £6,495
2004(04) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I 5DR HATCH, BLACK, 25000 miles £5,495

NISSAN

2008(58) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 4WD 5DR TD HATCH AUTO 4x4, CAFFE LATTE, 11000 miles £19,995
2010(10) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 10000 miles £19,995
2010(59) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 5DR HATCH, GREY, 12000 miles £19,495
2009(59) NISSAN QASHQAI N-TEC 5DR 4WD HATCH AUTO 4x4, NIGHTSHADE, 2000 miles £18,995
2009(09) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £17,995
2010(10) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 4000 miles £17,995
2008(58) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 14000 miles £14,995
2008(08) NISSAN QASHQAI ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 15000 miles £14,495
2010(60) NISSAN CUBE KAIZEN 5DR HATCH AUTO, WHITE, 1000 miles £12,995
2007(07) NISSAN QASHQAI VISIA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 24000 miles £10,995
2009(58) NISSAN MICRA 25 CONVERTIBLE CC CONVERTIBLE AUTO, RED, 11000 miles £9,995
2010(10) NISSAN MICRA TEKNA 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 6000 miles £9,995
2009(59) NISSAN NOTE VISIA MPV AUTO, GREY, 1800 miles £9,995
2009(59) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 7000 miles £8,495
2009(59) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles £8,495
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA SPIRITA 3DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 18000 miles £6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 15000 miles £6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA ACENTA PLUS 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 12000 miles £6,995
2010(59) NISSAN PIXO N-TEC 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 3000 miles £6,995
2007(57) NISSAN MICRA SPIRITA 3DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 11000 miles £6,495
2005(05) NISSAN ALMERA S 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 11000 miles £4,995
2002(02) NISSAN MICRA S 3DR HATCH AUTO, WHITE, 10000 miles £2,995

ASTRA HATCHBACKS

2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 950 miles £15,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA ELITE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles £11,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL ASTRA EXCLUSIV 3DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 6000 miles £9,995
2010(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 3DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles £9,495
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 3DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 5000 miles £9,495
2009(09) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, SILVER LIGHTNING, 14000 miles £8,995
2009(59) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 2000 miles £8,995
2009(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 8000 miles £8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 30000 miles £8,495
2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 11000 miles £7,495
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 19000 miles £6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, TURQUOISE, 20000 miles £6,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BEIGEBUFF, 14000 miles £6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 17000 miles £5,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 19000 miles £5,995
2008(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V E4 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles £5,995

ASTRA ESTATES

2008(58) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £7,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, SILVER, 14000 miles £6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 140 ESTATE AUTO, PANNACOTTA, 15000 miles £6,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 140 ESTATE AUTO, BLUE, 14000 miles £6,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 140 ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles £6,995
2006(56) VAUXHALL ASTRA DESIGN 16V ESTATE AUTO, PANACOTTA, 16000 miles £6,495
2006(56) VAUXHALL ASTRA LIFE AC 16V ESTATE AUTO, BLACK, 11000 miles £5,995

ZAFIRA MERIVA & AGILA

2009(09) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV CDTI TD MPV AUTO, GREEN, 7000 miles £12,995
2010(10) VAUXHALL MERIVA DESIGN 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 1000 miles £10,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA DESIGN DIRECT MPV AUTO, BLUE, 850 miles £10,995
2008(08) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 12000 miles £8,995
2009(09) VAUXHALL AGILA DESIGN 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles £8,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, TURQUOISE, 13000 miles £7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 14000 miles £7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 9000 miles £7,995
2007(07) VAUXHALL MERIVA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 19000 miles £6,995
2008(58) CHEVROLET MATIZ SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREEN, 7000 miles £5,995
2004(54) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA LIFE 16V MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 78000 miles £3,995

PEUGEOT

2010(60) PEUGEOT 308 S 5DR HATCH AUTO, ABYSS BLUE, 750 miles £10,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 307 S COUPE CABRIOLET COUPE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £9,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 307 S COUPE CABRIOLET COUPE AUTO, BLACK, 15000 miles £9,995
2010(10) PEUGEOT 207 S 16V 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 7000 miles £9,495
2008(08) PEUGEOT 307 SW SE ESTATE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 8000 miles £8,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 207 SPORT 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 2000 miles £7,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 206 LOOK 3DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 2000 miles £6,995
2007(57) PEUGEOT 307 S 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 18000 miles £6,995

MITSUBISHI

2007(57) MITSUBISHI LANCER ELEGANCE ESTATE AUTO, GREY, 19000 miles £6,995

HONDA

2007(07) HONDA CR-V I-VTEC ES 5DR HATCH AUTO 4x4, GREY, 24000 miles £17,995
2007(07) HONDA CR-V I-VTEC SE 5DR HATCH AUTO 4x4, GREY, 15000 miles £15,995
2006(06) HONDA CR-V I-VTEC SE ESTATE AUTO 4x4, BLACK, 26000 miles £11,995
2009(09) HONDA JAZZ DSI SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 3000 miles £10,995
2008(58) HONDA JAZZ DSI SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 9000 miles £10,495
2007(07) HONDA JAZZ DSI SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, RED, 8000 miles £8,995
2004(54) HONDA JAZZ DSI SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 18000 miles £6,495
2005(54) HONDA JAZZ DSI SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 33000 miles £5,995
2003(03) HONDA CIVIC SE EXECUTIVE 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 49000 miles £4,995

MERCEDES

2009(09) MERCEDES-BENZ CLK CLK200 KOMPRESSOR AVANTGARDE CONVERTIBLE AUTO, BLACK, 20000 miles £23,995
2007(57) MERCEDES-BENZ C CLASS C180K AVANTGARDE SE SALOON AUTO, CUBANITE SILVER, 23000 miles £13,995
2008(58) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A170 AVANTGARDE SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 16000 miles £13,995
2010(60) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A160 CLASSIC SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, MOUNTAIN GREY, 1610 miles £13,995
2008(58) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A150 CLASSIC SE LWB 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 6000 miles £10,995
2007(57) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A150 CLASSIC SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLUE, 5000 miles £9,995
2007(57) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A150 CLASSIC SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 6000 miles £9,995
2007(56) MERCEDES-BENZ A CLASS A150 CLASSIC SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 12000 miles £8,995
2002(02) MERCEDES-BENZ SLK SLK230 KOMPRESSOR CONVERTIBLE AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 38000 miles £7,995

VOLKSWAGEN

2008(57) VOLKSWAGEN GOLF MATCH FSI 115 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 17000 miles £11,995
2007(57) VOLKSWAGEN JETTA S TDI TD SALOON AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 19000 miles £9,995
2007(07) VOLKSWAGEN GOLF S 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 17000 miles £9,995
2006(06) VOLKSWAGEN GOLF SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 5000 miles £9,995
2007(57) VOLKSWAGEN GOLF S 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 16000 miles £9,995
2008(58) VOLKSWAGEN POLO MATCH 3DR AUTO, BLACK, 12000 miles £8,995
2007(07) VOLKSWAGEN POLO S 5DR HATCH AUTO, GREY, 13000 miles £7,995
2007(57) VOLKSWAGEN POLO S (80BHP) 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 18000 miles £7,995
2007(07) VOLKSWAGEN POLO S 3DR HATCH AUTO, REFLEX SILVER, 16000 miles £7,495
2003(53) VOLKSWAGEN GOLF SE 5DR HATCH AUTO, BLACK, 54000 miles £4,995

DIESEL AUTOMATICS

2008(58) NISSAN QASHQAI TEKNA 4WD 5DR TD HATCH AUTO 4x4, CAFFE LATTE, 11000 miles £19,995
2009(59) RENAULT GRAND SCENIC DYNAMIQUE DCI FAP TURBO MPV AUTO, BLUE, 6000 miles £16,995
2010(60) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA ELITE CDTI TURBO MPV AUTO, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 3000 miles £16,995
2009(09) VAUXHALL ZAFIRA EXCLUSIV CDTI TD MPV AUTO, GREEN, 7000 miles £12,995

MORRIS'S MANUAL CARS

2006(06) JAGUAR X-TYPE S D TD SALOON, RED, 72000 miles £7,995
2007(57) VAUXHALL MERIVA ENERGY CDTI TD MPV, BLACK, 24000 miles £6,995
2008(08) HYUNDAI MATRIX CLASSIC MPV, BLACK, 8000 miles £5,995
2008(08) RENAULT TWINGO DYNAMIQUE 3DR HATCH, ORANGE, 35000 miles £5,495
2006(56) VAUXHALL CORSA DESIGN 16V TWINPORT 3DR HATCH, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 2000 miles £5,495
2004(04) TOYOTA YARIS T SPIRIT VVT-I 5DR HATCH, BLACK, 25000 miles £5,495
2006(06) FORD FIESTA GHIA 16V 5DR HATCH, MAUVE, 35000 miles £5,495
2007(07) FIAT PANDA DYNAMIC 5DR HATCH, GREY, 8000 miles £4,995
2007(07) KIA PICANTO LS 5DR HATCH, BLUE, 17000 miles £4,995
2003(03) PEUGEOT 206 CC SILVER COUPE, ALUMINIUM SILVER, 27000 miles £4,695
2005(05) NISSAN MICRA S 5DR HATCH, BLACK, 21000 miles £3,995
2005(55) CITROEN C2 DESIGN 3DR HATCH, BLACK, 24000 miles £3,995
2005(05) VAUXHALL AGILA ENJOY 16V TWINPORT MPV, GOLD, 20000 miles £3,995
2004(04) PEUGEOT 206 SE 5DR HATCH, MOONSTONE SILVER, 36000 miles £3,995
2003(53) FORD FOCUS GHIA 5DR HATCH, TONIC BLUE, 44000 miles £3,995

SKODA

2008(58) SKODA ROOMSTER 2 16V MPV AUTO, BLUE, 8000 miles £8,995

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Farningham	08434 877569	Dartford	08434 877529	Bromley	08434 877881

Official Government Test Environmental Data. Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO2 emissions (g/km). New Corsa range. Urban: 28.8 (9.8) – 67.3 (4.2), Extra-urban: 47.9 (5.9) – 91.1 (3.1), Combined: 38.7 (7.3) – 80.7 (3.5). CO2 emissions from 172 – 94g/km.

*Offer available to individuals for orders received between 01.02.11 and 31.03.11. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package over 48 months and 6,000 miles per year (max). An advance rental of £1230 is payable, then 47 monthly rentals of £205. Rentals and excess charges are based on the current VAT rate. An excess charge of up to 6.38 ppm will be applied for mileage in excess of 6,000 mile p.a. Excess charges also apply if the car is not serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and returned to Vauxhall Leasing in a condition commensurate with the BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age and mileage. Package includes R.F.L. and Vauxhall Assistance. Price includes Swappage Allowance, metallic paint, and other models available at extra cost. The Vauxhall Swappage Scheme applies to customers trading in a qualifying car or commercial vehicle (up to 3.5 tonnes) against the purchase of selected new Vauxhall models. At the date of the new vehicle order, the vehicle traded in must be 7 years old or older from date of first registration in the UK. To qualify for the scheme, the owner of the trade vehicle (or their spouse/partner living at the same UK address) must be named as the registered keeper and resident at the UK address shown on the Vehicle Registration Document (V5C) and have owned the vehicle for a minimum of 90 days. The new vehicle must be registered at the same address. The vehicle must have a valid MOT and road tax (or that has expired no earlier than 14 days prior to the new vehicle order date) and be insured at the date of the new vehicle order. Offer subject to availability and status. UK supplied vehicles only. For full specification, details, terms and conditions contact your local WJ King dealer. Guarantee and/or indemnity may be required. Applicants must be 18 or over. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, e.g. if list price changes. Personal contract hire by ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA. WJ King reserve the right to withdraw any offer at any time. A £99 inc. VAT admin fee (security checks and fuel) will be added to all vehicle purchases, this includes £20 worth of fuel. Telephone calls may be recorded for training purposes. E&OE.

WJ King

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Farningham	08434 877569	Dartford	08434 877529	Bromley	08434 877881

Official Government Test Environmental Data – Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Vauxhall Range: urban 14.4 (19.6) – 67.3 (4.2), extra-urban 27.4 (10.3) – 91.1 (3.1), combined 20.6 (13.7) – 80.7 (3.5), CO2 Emissions 324 – 94g/km.

† Astra price is including Vauxhall Loyalty Bonus of £1000. *Offer available to individuals for orders received between 01.02.11 and 31.03.11. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package over 48 months and 6,000 miles per year (max). An advance rental of £2590 (Astra) £3825 (Insignia) is payable, then 47 monthly rentals of £215 (Astra) £318 (Insignia). Rentals and excess charges are based on the current VAT rate. An excess charge of up to 6.38 ppm will be applied for mileage in excess of 6,000 mile p.a. Excess charges also apply if the car is not serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and returned to Vauxhall Leasing in a condition commensurate with the BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age and mileage. Package includes R.F.L. and Vauxhall Assistance. Offer subject to availability and status. UK supplied vehicles only. For full specification, details, terms and conditions contact your local WJ King dealer. Guarantee and/or indemnity may be required. Applicants must be 18 or over. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, e.g. if list price changes. Personal contract hire by ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA. Please note, models portrayed are for illustration purposes only and may not represent actual model. WJ King reserve the right to withdraw any offer at any time. A £99 inc. VAT admin fee (security checks and fuel) will be added to all vehicle purchases, this includes £20 worth of fuel. Telephone calls may be recorded for training purposes. E&OE.

Skoda ditches cake baking in favour of snake making

DrivingReview
by
STEVE LOADER

Skoda Fabia vRS





SNAKE-POWERED: Skoda's latest ad campaign uses an engine made of snakes to highlight the potency of the new Fabia vRS engine

SKODA launched the current Fabia supermini with a compelling yet rather twee TV advert suggesting that carmaking is like making a cake.

This WI-inspired recipe was a tasty temptation for the Czech's brand's stereotypical customers: conservative, discerning and careful with money.

But the concoction wasn't ever going to work on people it hoped to persuade into the hot hatch Fabia vRS launched last year.

So the cake concept was turned on its head; instead of a bakery with workers in hygienic coats and hats, a new TV ad showed the vRS being shaped in a punkish Scrapheap Challenge-style metal shop with attitude and heavy music.

The magic ingredient? A snake for an engine. And is it all hype and froth? No.

The previous Fabia vRS was interesting and entertaining – unusually for this type of car, power came from a turbbodiesel – but the new version is the real deal and still great value.

The latter especially so when considering all the technological abbreviations and acronyms squeezed into the vRS, notably the one and only but crowd-pleasing gearbox option: the VW group's fabulous twin-clutch DSG.

It offers a glimpse into a not too distant future when such clutch pedal-free installations may be standard; it is both a fully functioning seven-speed manual gearbox with swift and smooth selection via stick or steering wheel paddles, or crisp yet smooth-shifting fully auto for when your snake-powered vRS is trapped in traffic.

With the lively 'twin-charger' supercharged and turbocharged 1.4-litre TSI engine turning out 180bhp, you also quickly take notice of another of the car's acronyms – XDS or electronic limited slip differential, designed to prevent the front driving wheels spinning themselves into a frenzy as they grapple with all that bhp.

Like most such gadgets, the XDS still can't stop the vRS scrabbling on gravel or in slippery conditions, but it keeps the car sensible enough to enjoy and you quickly realise how this and the gearbox takes this latest vRS to a higher level.

The old car was quick and, unusually, used a turbodiesel to supply the fast take-off, but that 1.9-litre lump also made the Mark 1 vRS a bit ponderous. The snake-powered Mark 2, on the other hand, can dance along a winding road like a rattler, aided and abetted by that DSG 'box.

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The beauty of this pocket rocket though is its ability to do the sensible stuff when needed; the twin charger format delivers 0-62mph in just 7.3 seconds if needed, but real world motoring means the modest 1.4-litre engine can mostly amble around delivering an average mpg in the mid-40s.

And the car's ability to eat up roads when required does not come at the price of a taut supension that nags even when you drive sedately; the vRS is perhaps one of the most comfortable hot hatches around and also comes with excellent sports-style seats.

Add all that to the five-seat van-like carrying capacity that comes as standard on the Mark 2 Fabia and this really is a hot hatch to please everyone.

And that includes the stingy, because vRS prices start at just £16,260.

Admittedly, the VW family has deployed the same formidable twin charger/DSG powertrain across a number of lively models and, most notably, in the £17,550 Seat Ibiza Cupra and the VW Polo GTI, which starts at £18,790 but will cost you £19,410 if you need to match the standard five-door practicality of Skoda's hooligan.

If you want an even bigger 'stow for go' factor you can also have the vRS estate version for £17,110, which still undercuts the three-door Cupra handsomely and makes the Polo looks downright extravagant.



DrivingPortfolio

SKODA FABIA VRS £16,260

Driving appeal (OUT OF FIVE)	★★★★★
Image	★★★★
Space	★★★★
Value	★★★★★
Running costs	★★★★
Reliability	★★★★★
How green?	★★★
Road tax	£125/year
Best rival	VW Polo

TheVerdict

DON'T LIKE: the styling. Even the hot hatch trappings cannot disguise the 'oh so practical' Fabia profile.

NOT SURE: the vRS is the ultimate hot hatch but…

REALLY LIKE: how it allows you to have your cake and eat it, with a mix of performance and practicality.

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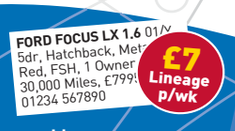
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02 02 VAUXHALL ZAFIRA 1.6 CLUB, 7 seater, silver, air con £2,995
01 Y VAUXHALL VECTRA SRi 150, silver, 5dr £1,695

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CARS TO CLEAR

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Making the case for a new motor



SUPERB EFFORT: Skoda's aptly named Superb range offers executive brand luxury at a mainstream price

By **STEVE LOADER**

SALES of new cars rose by nearly two per cent in 2010 – not bad considering that the UK economy is shaky.

Admittedly, the car industry is still braced for an expected fall of five per cent during 2011 – partly prompted by the VAT rise last month – but the fact that sales are not in freefall underlines why so many people still want a new car.

For a start, not many buyers see moving house as an option: the housing market is flat and if they are in a steady job, they don't want to jeopardise that by opting for another post elsewhere.

And if they also have cash in the bank, they know it's earning little interest at a time when there are big savings to be had on a new car, thanks to carmakers and forecourts desperate to deal, and new fuel-saving economies on the vehicles themselves.

There is a new realism about list prices anyway as manufacturers recognise that these fairy tale figures put off private buyers, thereby outweighing their intended benefit: to convince fleet buyers of fantastic bulk buy discounts and also to give dealers room to manoeuvre on deals and part exchanges.



FEEL-GOOD FACTOR: Mazda's MX-5 remains a popular buy even in tough times

Other buyer incentives out there in a tough market include attractive packages on finance – which banks simply won't match – insurance and servicing.

There are also outstanding warranties available such as Vauxhall's 'lifetime' guarantee on cars up to 100,000 miles.

Servicing deals often cost extra but can be cost-effective, so ask about those if one is not offered.

Remember too that road tax also favours downsizing or changing to a leaner and meaner motor; most superminis and many family hatchbacks now qualify for zero road tax in year one and modest charges thereafter.

Petrol power is also battling back against diesel, particularly lower down the market.

The fuel itself is set to stay cheaper than diesel simply because oil refining capacity is geared more to the former.

Petrol engines also cost less to buy upfront and are lighter, and while they still cannot compete on economy with diesels, it is the savings elsewhere that quietly add up: less wear and tear on tyres and front end mechanicals.

Diesels may have won over many sceptics with their good low down power delivery, but small and efficient turbocharged petrol units are making a difference here now and, with the nimbleness of petrol power, make for more entertaining driving.

Petrol engine emissions are also being lowered steadily so their road tax and emissions credentials are far better.

Factor in all of the above and the sums start to add up on ditching something dated and less efficient in favour of a modern and more eco-friendly model.

• ***For more on '11 New Reg' trends and buying tips, see inside.***

Buyers find small is beautiful

by STEVELOADER

DOWNSIZING continues to be the UK motor market's buzzword.

Some 20 years ago, the family saloon/company car sector was dominant, largely thanks to the company car culture where big and brash was beautiful.

Then came the rise of the family hatchback and supermini; throughout the Nineties and early Noughties they had a ding-dong battle for market leadership.

However, helped by soaring fuel and insurance costs, greater environmental awareness and then by Government legislation via punitive road tax on larger cars, ever more stylish superminis have gained well over 40 per cent of sales if you include the even smaller city car segment – family hatchbacks had to settle for the No2 spot with around 25 per cent of registrations.

Crossover

More difficult to quantify though is the trend towards 'crossovers' – cars like the Nissan Qashqai, Skoda Yeti and Peugeot 3008.

As the name implies they straddle several sectors including family hatchback, MPV (multi-purpose vehicle) or people carrier and SUV (Sports Utility Vehicle) and are hard to pigeonhole under the current classification system.

Many manufacturers have already tried to apply the sexy new crossover label to what would once have been their SUV models – especially as the 4x4/SUV sector has declined – and we can expect an industry reappraisal of how classes are defined and counted.

This could then show a burgeoning third sector comprising the new-age crossover designs.

In the meantime, registration figures from motor industry mouthpiece, the SMMT, show how superminis (S) and family hatchbacks (H) rule the UK top 10:

1) Ford Fiesta (S)
2) Vauxhall Astra(H)
3) Ford Focus (H)
4) Vauxhall Corsa (S)
5) VW Golf (H)
6) VW Polo (S)
7) Peugeot 207 (H)
8) BMW 3-Series
9) Mini (H)
10) Nissan Qashqai



SMALLER AND LEANER: One of the UK's supermini best sellers, the Vauxhall Corsa, is also available in fuel-sipping Ecoflex form



STILL KING? Honda's pioneering Jazz remains the benchmark in the mini MPV sector



VERSATILE: Toyota's Verso MPV offers seven seats within a compact yet spacious body

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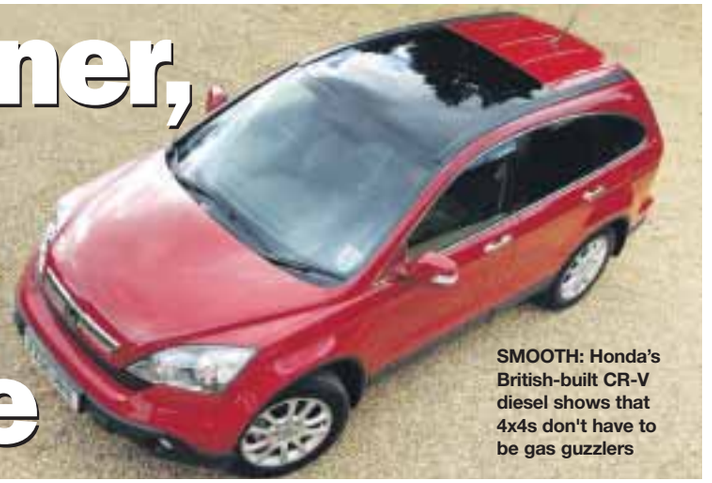
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by STEVELOADER

It's a leaner, meaner market out there



SMOOTH: Honda's British-built CR-V diesel shows that 4x4s don't have to be gas guzzlers

GLOBAL warming and care for the environment has created a need for leaner and meaner models.

New road tax bandings, ranging from zero to £950 a year for gas guzzling limos or 4x4s, are changing our car buying habits too.

Of course, anyone spending £50,000-100,000 on a new motor won't worry about small change like that, but most people like saving a few quid there and through the improved economy of greener cars, while incidentally doing their bit for the environment.

Longer term, electric cars may be the answer and there has been lots of publicity about 'plug-in' models for overnight charging at home or city centre charging points.

But battery technology has some catching up to do and the zero emissions argument is misleading. Until we have zero emission power stations, electric cars simply transfer the CO2 and noxious gas output from exhaust pipe to belching chimney.

Refinement

Are hybrids the answer then? Japanese giants Toyota and Honda lead here, pairing conventional engines with electric power and batteries.

However, hybrids are expensive to buy and the economy at motorway speeds is no better than a frugal diesel.

And so we return to the internal combustion 'lump' where emissions are plummeting, economy is soaring and refinement is improving.

In fact, things are moving so fast that you marvel at what a few legislative kicks up the backside have achieved.

The downsizing phenomenon is well under way too, with several new cars proving that 'small is beautiful'.

Most carmakers also now have an 'eco' sub-brand such as Vauxhall's Ecoflex, Skoda's Greenline, and Seat's Ecomotive.

But they often don't come cheap, so weigh potential long-term savings against upfront cost – if you don't cover the miles, conventional alternatives may be a better bet.

Don't ignore petrol models either; the higher price of diesel cars and the fuel at the pumps must be compared with new small capacity low emission/consumption petrol engines such as the turbocharged 1.4-litre units found in the Skoda and Seat ranges.



NEWLY-LAUNCHED: Citroën's latest C4 family hatchback does 'lean and mean' in style



POPULAR: Mazda3 highlights how the Japanese marque has sought better fuel economy and lower emissions hrough lightness and clever design

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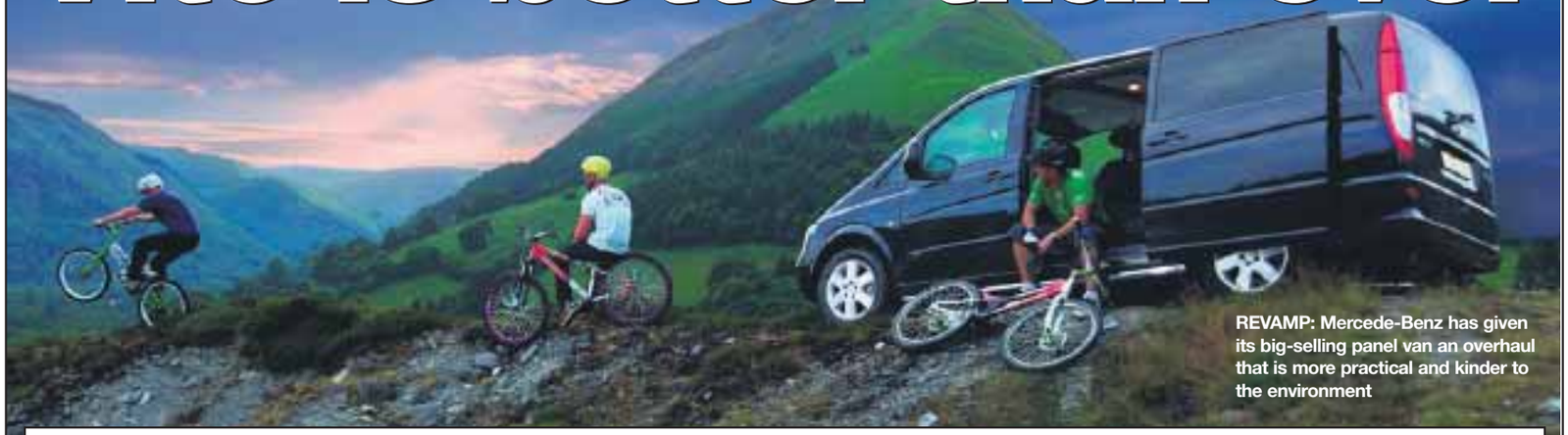
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Models shown AYGO Go! 1.0 VVT-i 3 door manual £8,995. Metallic paint £418.72 extra. ^Price is calculated by deducting £555 customer saving and £200 Centre contribution from the manufacturer's list price of £9,750 and is correct at time of going to press. Yaris T Spirit 1.0 VVT-i 3 door manual £10,995. Metallic paint £418.72 extra. #Price is calculated by deducting £1,500 customer saving and £200 Centre contribution from manufacturer's list price of £12,695 and is correct at time of going to press. Includes VAT, delivery charge, number plates, 1 year's road fund licence & £55 first registration fee. Subject to availability. Only available for new retail orders of models shown between 16 December and 31 March 2011 and registered before 30 June 2011. 5 year/100,000 mile manufacturer's warranty is subject to terms and conditions, including requirement that servicing of vehicle in accordance with the standard Toyota service schedule for the full 5 year period. *Free servicing offer and 6.9% APR only available for new retail orders of models shown between 16 December and 31 March 2011 and registered and financed through Toyota Financial Services, Great Burgh, Burgh Heath, Epsom, Surrey, KT18 5UZ, before 30 June 2011 on a 3 year AccessToyota (PCP) plan. Indemnities may be required. Finance subject to status to over 18s. Free servicing offer includes the first three scheduled services at an official Toyota Centre (every 10,000 miles or 12 months whichever is first). Terms and conditions apply. Toyota Centres are independent of Toyota Financial Services.

AYGO Go! 1.0 VVT-i 3 door manual Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 51.4 (5.5), Extra Urban 70.6 (4.0), Combined 61.4 (4.6). CO_2 Emissions 105g/km.
Yaris T Spirit 1.0 VVT-i 3 door manual Official Fuel Consumption Figures in mpg (l/100km): Urban 45.6 (6.2), Extra Urban 61.4 (4.6), Combined 55.4 (5.1). CO_2 Emissions 118g/km.

Vito is better than ever



REVAMP: Mercede-Benz has given its big-selling panel van an overhaul that is more practical and kinder to the environment

TOUGH, indestructible and dependable – day-in, day-out, the Mercedes-Benz Vito applies itself uncomplainingly to the rigours of the tasks on hand.

This is a van that knows its business: Mercedes-Benz has undertaken a comprehensive revamp of its big-selling panel van, which is more economical and kinder on the environment, yet more practical and more dynamic.

New engines and new transmissions reduce emissions and fuel consumption by up to 15 percent while enhancing performance.

The fully reconfigured chassis is tailored to the transportation of goods or passengers, according to the model concerned. The driver's workplace in all models and the passenger compartment of the Vito Traveliner are more attractively appointed than ever too.

Robustness

The new Mercedes Vito is readily recognisable by its new 'face', combining the style of the current passenger cars from Mercedes-Benz with the robustness of a commercial vehicle.

The central innovation in the latest Vito is a completely new drive offering particularly economical and environmentally friendly operation. All engines comply with the Euro 5 emissions standard.

Fuel consumption has fallen markedly once again, accompanied by cuts of up to 15 percent in CO2 emissions, depending on the engine variant. Further reductions in fuel consumption and emissions are possible with the BlueEfficiency models.

This innovative package, which is available for the Vito panel van and comes as standard for the Vito Traveliner, is a unique offering in the van market.

The new four-cylinder engines rated at 95hp in the Vito 110 CDI, 136hp in the Vito 113 CDI and 163hp in the Vito 116 CDI are provided with balancer shafts for impressively smooth running.

All diesel engines are equipped with an oxidation catalytic converter, a particulate filter and cooled exhaust gas recirculation.

The new ECO Gear six-speed manual transmission for all four-cylinder models offers a broad gear ratio spread for optimum performance and enables low fuel consumption and emission levels.

Top of the range among the diesel engines is the V6 in the Vito 122 CDI, which combines smooth running with impressive output and high tractive power. With a power output of 224hp, it now offers even better performance, while combining economy with environment-friendliness.

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Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). New Corsa Excite 1.0i 12v ecoFLEX. Urban: 44.8 (6.3), Extra-urban: 67.3 (4.2), Combined: 56.5 (5.0). CO_2 emissions: 117g/km.

* Offer available to individuals for orders received between 01.02.11 and 31.03.11. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package over 48 months and 6,000 miles per year (max). An advance rental of £567 is payable, then 47 monthly rentals of £189. Rentals and excess charges are based on the current VAT rate. An excess charge of up to 6.38 ppm will be applied for mileage in excess of 6,000 mile p.a. Excess charges also apply if the car is not serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and returned to Vauxhall Leasing in a condition commensurate with the BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age and mileage. Package includes R.F.L. and Vauxhall Assistance. Offer subject to availability and status. UK supplied vehicles only. For full specification, details, terms and conditions contact your local retailer. Guarantee and/or indemnity may be required. Applicants must be 18 or over. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, e.g. if list price changes. Personal contract hire by ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA. (Vaux106446)

by STEVELOADER

Decisions, decisions

NEVER before have car buyers been so spoilt for and bewildered by the choice of new cars on offer.

Just a few years ago most models on sale would fit a handful of sectors, but those have exploded into a market laden with niches – some of them with their own separate niches.

So who are the movers and shakers? Crossovers have become the hot property, a sector pioneered and still highlighted by cars like the Nissan Qashqai – part MPV or people carrier, part SUV/4x4 and part family hatchback.

But that's a crowd pleaser; many buyers have a major factor dominating their choice, so here are some of the car types recommending themselves to such buyers:



GOING GREEN: For some buyers and many companies now, green motoring is the priority and Toyota increased its grip on the low consumption/emissions hybrid sector by launching the British-built Auris hybrid family hatchback – a more affordable use of the petrol-electric powertrain from its pioneering Prius model

EXECUTIVE CLASS: Big cars and 4x4s are seen increasingly as anti-social and extravagant, so many buyers have downsized into compact executive models, like this all-wheel drive Saab 9-3X, without sacrificing status or luxury





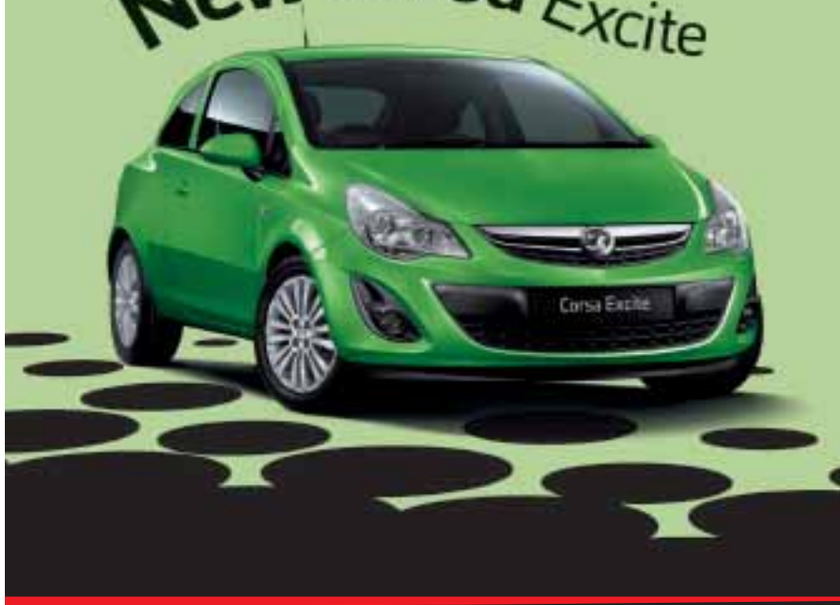
THE MPV: The multi-purpose vehicle satisfies those who need space and passenger capacity above all else. The type is epitomised by the Citroën Picasso C4 line-up. The French marque's Picasso MPV sub-brand has been so successful it has even chosen to make two distinct versions of its big-selling C4 model – so there's the stylish five-seat 'standard' model (left) and the seven-seat Grand Picasso



THE ESTATE: Hush, don't call it an estate. Anything but please, for the once humble and utilitarian estate car has been reinvented as a lifestyle purchase by a change of name and styling – outright load capacity is now often sacrificed for a rakish rear end. This classy offering from Vauxhall is the Astra Sports Tourer

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Fuel consumption figures mpg (litres/100km) and CO_2 emissions (g/km). New Corsa Excite 1.0i 12v ecoFLEX. Urban: 44.8 (6.3), Extra-urban: 67.3 (4.2), Combined: 56.5 (5.0). CO_2 emissions: 117g/km.

* Offer available to individuals for orders received between 01.02.11 and 31.03.11. Figures based on a non-maintenance contract hire package over 48 months and 6,000 miles per year (max). An advance rental of £567 is payable, then 47 monthly rentals of £189. Rentals and excess charges are based on the current VAT rate. An excess charge of up to 6.38 ppm will be applied for mileage in excess of 6,000 mile p.a. Excess charges also apply if the car is not serviced and maintained in accordance with manufacturer guidelines and returned to Vauxhall Leasing in a condition commensurate with the BVRLA Fair Wear & Tear guidelines for its age and mileage. Package includes R.F.L. and Vauxhall Assistance. Offer subject to availability and status. UK supplied vehicles only. For full specification, details, terms and conditions contact your local retailer. Guarantee and/or indemnity may be required. Applicants must be 18 or over. Details correct at time of publication and may vary, e.g. if list price changes. Personal contract hire by ALD Automotive Ltd., trading as Vauxhall Leasing, Oakwood Park, Lodge Causeway, Fishponds, Bristol BS16 3JA.



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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the upgraded Mazda2 range: Urban 34.9 (8.1) – 56.5 (5.0), Extra Urban 53.3 (5.3) – 76.3 (3.7), Combined 44.8 (6.3) – 67.3 (4.2). CO_2 emissions (g/km) 146 – 110.

All offers for retail sales & subject to availability at participating dealers only on vehicles registered between 4 January and 31 March 2011. Offers may be varied and withdrawn at any time. *5.9% finance available over 3 years and 3.9% finance available over 2 years on all upgraded Mazda2 models. ^^Mazda deposit contribution available on upgraded Mazda2 5dr TS and Tamura models when financed on Mazda personal contract purchase and only valid until 28 February 2011. Finance subject to status. Terms and conditions apply. Applicants must be 18 or over. Guarantees/Indemnities may be required. Mazda Financial Services RH1 1SR. **Service offer: Available on upgraded Mazda2 Tamura and Takuya models with Mazda Personal Contract Purchase finance only: 3 year finance agreement available with 3 years complimentary servicing or 37,500 miles, whichever comes first, and includes a maximum of 3 services. 2 year finance agreement available with 2 years complimentary servicing or 25,000 miles, whichever comes first, and includes a maximum of 2 services. Complimentary servicing covers the manufacturers scheduled servicing only at a participating Mazda Authorised dealer. Terms & Conditions Apply. ^VAT offer: All upgraded Mazda2 models available with VAT at the equivalent of 17.5%. Mazda's VAT offer applies to the current retail list price and excludes the first registration fee, road tax and all factory fitted and dealer fitted options that will be charged at the standard 2011 VAT rate, currently set at 20%. Model shown: Upgraded Mazda2 1.3 5dr Tamura. OTR £12,004. Model shown includes metallic paint (£420). On the road price includes VAT, number plates, delivery, 12 months' road fund licence, 1st registration fee, 3 year or 60,000 mile warranty and 3 years' European Roadside Assistance. Details correct at time of going to print. *Test drives subject to applicant status and availability.

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The Trade and Upgrade Programme enables eligible customers to obtain a minimum part exchange value for a qualifying vehicle when purchasing a new Hyundai at a participating authorised UK Hyundai dealer by 31st March 2011. The £3,000 allowance offer is for the purchase of a new Hyundai i30, the £2,000 allowance offer is for the purchase of a new Hyundai i20 and the £1,700 allowance offer is for the purchase of a new Hyundai i10, excluding i10 Classic that qualifies for a £1,500 allowance. The scheme is subject to the terms and conditions of the programme – see www.hyundai.co.uk/tradeupgrade or ask your local dealer. Offers are subject to availability and may be varied or withdrawn at any time and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offers. Warranty terms and exclusions apply – see www.hyundai.co.uk/owners/5YearWarranty/ or ask your local dealer.

Fuel consumption in MPG (l/100km) for Hyundai range: Urban 25.9 (10.9) - 61.4 (4.6), Extra Urban 39.8 (7.1) - 74.3 (3.8), Combined 33.2 (8.5) - 67.3 (4.2) CO_2 Emissions 225 -110 g/km.

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Fuel consumption figures for the Jazz range in mpg (l/100km): Urban 41.5 - 42.8 (6.8 - 6.6), Extra Urban 56.5 - 60.1 (5.0 - 4.7), Combined 50.4 - 52.3 (5.6 - 5.4). CO_2 emissions: 130 - 125 g/km. Offers valid on new retail cars registered from 1 February to 30 March 2011. Applies to 11YM Jazz range only, 12YM Jazz is excluded. Offers applicable at participating Dealers and are at the Promoter's absolute discretion. Subject to model, colour and stock availability, certain grades may be limited. **£1,000 Saving** is off the 2011 'on the road' price. **50/50 offer:** Indemnities may be required in certain circumstances. Finance is only available to persons aged 18 or over, subject to status. All figures are correct at time of publication but may be subject to change. Credit provided by Honda Finance Europe Plc. 470 London Road, Slough, Berkshire SL3 8QY.

Early acceleration for the motorcycle sector

FIGURES from the Motor Cycle Industry Association (MCI) show that sales of motorcycles and mopeds in the first month of the year rose notably against those at this time last year.

Total registrations of all powered-two wheelers went up by 25.5 per cent compared to January 2010 – splitting the figure further shows motorcycle sales growing 29.2 per cent and mopeds by 10.6 per cent.

It underlines how, despite UK economic difficulties, people are continuing to take to two wheels for pleasure as well as practical and economical reasons – industry watchers point to a trend emerging towards everyday commuter machines.

The entry-level sector of machines with a engine capacity of 50cc-125cc has seen the biggest growth of 44.5 per cent, a clear indicator that the industry's Get On campaign is continuing to take effect.

The three top growth areas by sector are Adventure Sport (52 per cent), Scooter (43 per cent) and Supersport (41.5 per cent). Scooter style motorcycles accounted for the highest number of registrations in January (958 machines) followed by the Naked (stripped back non-fairing) sector (732).

MCI chief executive Steve Kenward said: "Time wasted in congestion and the massive costs of car ownership, especially for younger people looking to get insured on a car, make a powered-two wheeler increasingly attractive.

"A motorcycle or scooter is a real and viable alternative to a car, or public transport, and can cut journey times, is easier to park, costs less to run and helps reduce CO2 emissions. It makes more sense than ever for people to consider making the switch to this mode of transport."

For people who don't have a licence, but are thinking about giving two-wheels a go, the industry is also making it easier for people to try out biking for free with a local training school.

For more information about the Get On campaign or to sign up for a free one-hour ride go to www.geton.co.uk.



SUPER HERO: Suzuki's all-new GSX-R600 has been hailed as the new king of the Supersport class. Redesigned from the ground-up, the new version has shed an incredible nine kilos compared to the 2010 model

Foundry Motorcycles Big Weekend



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OFFICIAL GOVERNMENT FUEL CONSUMPTION FIGURES(RANGE): URBAN CYCLE, EXTRA URBAN, COMBINED (LITRES PER 100KM/MPG) & CO2 EMISSIONS (G/KM): HIGHEST: Citroën C3 Picasso 1.6 VTi 120hp VTR+ 9.4/30.1, 5.5/51.4, 6.9/40.9, 159. LOWEST: New Citroën C3 1.6HDi 90hp VTR+ 4.7/60.1, 3.3/85.6, 3.8/74.3, 99.

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Court ruling to have impact on insurance

TONY HETHERINGTON MONEY CLINIC



Q I have just passed my driving test but have not yet got my own car. My mother has added me to her insurance, so I can drive her car, but she was advised to sort out my own insurance as quickly as possible because new laws will increase women's premiums. Is this true? KL

A Yes, this is true – probably! Everything depends on a European Court decision that is expected next week, on Friday. A consumer group in Belgium wants the court to rule that it is illegal to charge men and women different insurance premiums, and it looks as though the judge will agree. If he does, the results will be enormous and the ripples will spread far wider than just motoring policies.
Young women drivers have far fewer accidents than young men, so pay less for their insurance.
The AA says women's premiums can be as much as 50pc cheaper, and could increase substantially immediately the judgment is enforced. There is no way of knowing whether the court's decision will apply at once or at a date to be set in the future, but you could be looking at paying an extra £1,000 a year.
At the other end of the age scale, people approaching retirement may be badly hit. Men die younger than women, so a man with a private pension plan gets more than a woman of the same age, because her pension will typically last four or five years longer. If this is outlawed, a man retiring next month could see his pension crash by about 10pc. I suppose there is always a chance that Parliament will stand up to the European Court.
MPs recently voted down European plans to give prisoners the vote, so perhaps they will also come to the rescue of young women drivers and men approaching retirement.

Q Tesco Bank is offering 5.2pc interest. Is this the same as the supermarket company, or is it a different firm? Is the account safe? PD

A Tesco Bank really is part of the huge supermarket group. But its highest interest rate on any savings account is 3.75pc.
What you have heard about is a "corporate bond", or IOU. You lend Tesco Bank £2,000 upwards, and the bank will pay annual interest of 5.2pc until 2018, when your bond will be repaid in full.
Meanwhile, those bonds are traded on the stock market, with the price rising or falling each day.
It is very unlikely that anything will go wrong with a company so big, but if disaster did strike, your bond would not be protected by the official compensation scheme that rescues savers, because it is a stock market investment and not a bank account.
Only you can decide whether you can lock your money away, possibly for as long as seven years.

Q Our bank statement showed a direct debit payment to the power company Eon, but we do not use Eon. I told the bank, and the money was returned to our account immediately, but how did Eon get our details in the first place? LH

A Direct debit rules say your bank must replace the money as soon as you say that a payment was not authorised, so top marks to your bank for doing just that. My guess is that Eon's bank meant to take a payment from someone else's account and someone typed in your account details by mistake. Just one incorrect figure could have meant that you paid someone else's gas or electric bill. This is one more reason why we all need to check our bank statements.

Q I have been told to expect a £100 fine because I missed the January 31 deadline for filing my tax return online. Is there any appeal against this? CR

A You have told me that when you went to the Revenue website to file your tax return, you were asked to register. You were then advised you would be sent confirmation details, allowing you to file online, but those details arrived after the deadline because they were sent by post for security reasons There is an appeal procedure, but according to the tax man it is meant for people who were ill, or whose vital documents had been lost in a flood or fire. As you had nine months to file your return, it is unlikely an appeal would succeed.

Q My grandfather had shares in Abbey National, that became shares in Santander when it took over. He died recently, and my two brothers and I are supposed to divide the small holding of shares, so none of us will end up with much. Could we sign them over to charity instead? NR

A If you have a favourite charity, you could certainly hand over the shares. Or you could contact Sharegift (020 7930 3737), which is a charity that turns unwanted shares into cash for good causes, and deals with the necessary paperwork.

■ If you have a personal-finance question, write to Tony Hetherington, MyMoney24, Prospect House, Rouen Road, Norwich NR1 1RE. We regret that neither Tony nor the MyMoney24 team can enter into personal correspondence.

Tax cheats face increased scrutiny

Letters are about to land on the doormats of 900 tax cheats warning them that they under an increased level of scrutiny from the authorities.
Under a programme called Managing Deliberate Defaulters (MDD), known evaders – both individuals and businesses – will be closely monitored by HM Revenue & Customs.
The scrutiny is designed to prevent tax cheats from going back to their old ways once they have been punished for their past misdemeanours.
"Tax cheat check-ups will involve continued and close scrutiny – it is a real deterrent," said Steve Hickman, of HM Revenue & Customs.
"If you are thinking about breaking the rules, remember that you could end up with HMRC on your back for five years."
The level and term of monitoring will depend on the seriousness of the previous offence, but it is thought that anyone who is in the programme will be monitored for at least two years.
HMRC said that as well as checking that returns are filed on time and all tax that is due is paid correctly, there will be regular reviews of people's tax affairs to check that any errors or failings have been put right.
"We have worked closely with the accountant community to develop this programme and their help has been invaluable in getting the detail right," said Mr Hickman.
Tax evaders who fail to keep their affairs in order are being warned they will face increasingly intrusive interventions from the authorities, and they could be subject to further criminal proceedings.
Safeguards are also being put in place to ensure that deliberate defaulters do not escape scrutiny by starting new businesses under different names or identities.



EXPENSIVE BUSINESS: This young child could cost his parents more than £200,000 by the time he is 21.

Children still proving pricey

By ADAM AIKEN
MyMoney24 editor

The cost of raising a child has risen by 50pc over the past eight years, and has now smashed through the £200,000 barrier.

Even over the past year, with the official rate of inflation going way over the Bank of England's 2pc target, the cost of bringing up children has risen quicker than costs elsewhere, with a 4.5pc increase over the past 12 months.

"Parents are all too aware that having a child comes with a hefty bill when you factor in things like childcare, schooling and holidays over a 21-year stretch," said Mark Jones, head of protection at LV=, which carried out a study into the cost of having children.

"Childcare and education must feel like another mortgage payment for some parents as this is still the biggest outlay and shows no signs of slowing down, particularly when many universities are set to increase tuition fees up to £9,000 a year from 2012."

The cost of raising children has been presented by LV= on an average basis, and there are likely to be huge variations between parents of different means and in different situations.

But the figures – once they have been aggregated over a 21-year period – still bring home the impact of how much it can cost to bring up a child.

According to the research, parents typically spend £67,000 on childcare and babysitting; £55,000 on education; £18,000 on food; £15,000 on clothing; £14,000 on holidays; and £10,000 on hobbies and toys.

Even pocket money apparently costs an average of more than £4,500 for each child.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, children are most expensive between the ages of 18 and 21, when they typically cost parents £14,365 a year. And with tuition fees set to see a huge increase, education is expected to form the biggest single area of expenditure for parents from next year.

More than three quarters of those who took part in the Cost of a Child Report said the economic climate had hit them hard, with 78pc having made cutbacks or economised over the past year because of financial pressures.

Holidays and short breaks have fallen victim, and there has also been a reduction in the purchase of new clothes by nearly half the parents who were surveyed.

Meanwhile, a majority of parents said they would be affected by the changes to child benefit.

Nearly a third of parents said they expected to have to cut back their spending as a direct result of losing the benefit, which can be worth up to £66 a month for a family's eldest child.

News

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On the blogs

Peter Sharkey: Consider cheaper alternatives this Isa season

Take some action to avoid driving up motoring costs

Motoring is getting even more expensive, leading drivers to take evasive action. **ADAM AIKEN** reports.



HIGHWAY HELL: Motorists are facing both rising costs and increasing levels of traffic on British roads.

A growing number of motorists are expected to change their driving habits thanks to the seemingly ever-increasing cost of running a car.

Insurance premiums and fuel have both soared in recent months, with two thirds of all drivers saying that the huge costs have taken their toll.

The price of insuring a vehicle rose by more than 30pc last year, or by an average of 44p a day, according to research by Moneysupermarket.com, and the cost of filling a tank with petrol or diesel has been the subject of much comment in recent months.

Environmentalists will see some good coming out of all this, with the Moneysupermarket research suggesting that 8pc of motorists are looking to ditch their cars and make use of public transport instead.

But for those people who intend to keep using their vehicles, a few tips on bringing down the cost of motoring are in order.

"With escalating fuel prices hitting motorists hard in the pocket, I'm not surprised most are looking for ways to drive down the cost of getting behind the wheel – especially when the cost of insurance cover is on the rise, too," said Peter Harrison, of Moneysupermarket.

INSURANCE

Mr Harrison said: "Our analysis shows car insurance prices increased by 31pc in 2010. With prices on the up, it is more important than ever that drivers ensure they are shopping around for the best deals on insurance. Those who do will reap rewards and make their hard-earned cash go further.

"When newly insuring a car, providers may lure drivers in with competitive deals or special discounts in the first year which are not ordinarily available to existing policyholders. Rest assured that if you don't shop around in the second year, certain insurers will not hesitate to increase your renewal price – hardly the thanks deserved for being a loyal customer."

Moneysupermarket reckons that more than six million drivers a year automatically renew their policies. But by sticking with their existing insurers, motorists are wasting an average of £270 each by paying over the odds.

"Insurers count on customer apathy to reap the profits, so it is alarming that so many motorists are prepared to waste their hard-earned cash by not looking for better deals.

"Even if you think your quote can't be beaten, it takes only a few minutes to make sure you really do have the best value policy to suit your needs."

However, Ian Crowder, of AA Insurance, said it was important for people using price-comparison websites to compare like with like.

"You need to make sure you know what you're buying," he said.

"Quite often when you see a lower quote on a price-comparison site, it's because there is a higher excess or be-cause things such as legal assistance on foreign cover is not included.

"Those things become bolt-on goodies instead, and once you have added them to the cost of your new quote, you can find you are back where you are started."

Something else that motorists – especially young drivers – can do to help get their premiums lower is avoid con-victions

"It might sound obvious, but keep you nose clean and your premiums are likely to come down," said Mr Crowder.

"It might be uncool to drive within the speed limit, but if you avoid any claims or speeding convictions you might find your premium falls by as much as a third the first time you come to renew your insurance."

Meanwhile, if you change jobs or substantially cut your annual mileage, let your insurer know. The way you use your car can have a significant impact on what you pay.

FUEL EFFICIENCY

As well as the 8pc of drivers in the Moneysupermarket study who said they would be looking to switch to public transport because of rising motoring costs, nearly half of those asked said they would look to get more fuel-efficient cars when they replaced their current vehicles.

As well as being more economical with fuel, other benefits include a cut in road tax and savings on the congestion charge when driving in central London. The AA's Mr Crowder also said he had recently come across a district council that allowed free parking for environmentally-friendly cars.

For the majority of drivers, though, it's going to be a case of taking measures to keep their existing fuel costs down.

Mr Crowder that taking a few simple steps, such as not carrying unnecessary loads around and removing unused roof-racks, would help cut the use of fuel.

He added: "Make sure your tyres are inflated correctly. If they are too soft, they will suck up fuel.

"The same thing will happen if your tracking is out. If you ever go over a large pothole or bump on to a kerb, have your tracking checked as soon as you can."

Each of these tips might save only a few pence, but the extra costs can soon add up if you don't take care.

PICK OF THE WEEK

In association with the experts at Moneyfacts.co.uk, we highlight some of the best new products launched this week.

Savings: Barclays

Barclays has launched its latest five-year-fixed rate bond. The minimum investment is £500, which pays an annual rate of 4.25pc, or 4.17pc for monthly interest. Savers with deposits of £50,000 or above will receive a rate of 4.75pc, or 4.65pc for monthly interest. Further additions are not allowed and, as with many fixed-rate deals, no earlier access is permitted. Investors must be aged 18 and over and can operate this account in branch only.

Why is it good? This it is amongst the market-leading long-term bonds, as long as investors have £50,000 or more to invest. Savers must ensure they are committed to locking funds away for the duration of the term.

Savings: Nationwide

The popular Mysave Online Plus account has been relaunched, paying a monthly rate of 2.91pc, including a 1.41pc bonus for 12 months. Investments range between £1,000 and £3m. Investors can make one penalty-free withdrawal a year. If more than one is made within a 12-month period, the rate will reduce to 0.1pc for the month in which it was made. All withdrawals must be made via a nominated account. Savers must be 16 and over for this online-only account.

Why is it good? This latest deal from Nationwide heads straight to the top of the no-notice internet market with its competitive rate, including a bonus for 12 months. Whilst this is very appealing, savers must remember that only one-penalty free withdrawal is allowed a year, otherwise there is a penalty.

Mortgages: Co-operative Bank

The Co-op has reviewed its fixed-rate mortgage range. The five-year rate of 6.09pc has been reduced to 5.89pc until May 31, 2016. The maximum loan-to-value is 90pc and a fee of £999 is payable. The deal also offers a host of flexible features such as the options to make overpayments and underpayments and to take payment holidays.

Why is it good? A rate reduction of 0.2pc means this five-year deal features as one of the lower rates in the market. The high LTV will please borrowers with limited deposits, while a fee of £999 plus many features help to heighten its appeal.

Mortgages: Yorkshire Building Society

The Yorkshire has increased selected rates across its fixed range. But despite a rate increase of 0.4pc, the two-year deal at 3.79pc still offers borrowers a good overall product with a maximum LTV of 75pc and a fee of £495. A plethora of incentives are also offered. First and second-time buyers can enjoy £250 rebates, remortgagers will receive free legal fees and all borrowers enjoy free valuations. Overpayments of up to 10pc of the outstanding balance can be made.

Why is it good? The two-year product of 3.79pc remains competitive and stands out, mainly due to the low fee of £495 and the incentives.

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INSIDE THIS WEEK



BUSINESSES are being urged to back The Prince's Trust Enterprise Programme, with the incentive of a potential £360,000 boost to the Kent economy. Trust officials say further support will provide more unemployed 18- to 30-year-olds with the skills and know-how required to set up their own companies. It is estimated this could bring £360,000 to Kent in the next three years. See our report inside.

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Slick tourism campaign launches second phase



MAJESTIC: Dover Castle as featured in the Kent Contemporary campaign's next phase

By **SIMON ROBINSON**
simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

VISIT Kent has launched the second phase of its eye-catching tourism marketing campaign.

The first set of Kent Contemporary advertising photographs was posted on billboards, trains and railway and Underground stations between May and October, last year.

They proved a hit – persuading thousands of visitors to venture into the county and helping to deliver an £18 million boost to the Kent economy, a 47:1 return on investment for the five-month campaign.

The second wave of photos includes shots of Dover Castle, Folkestone's Creative Quarter, Chatham Historic Dockyard and kite-surfers at Greatstone.

A Visit Kent official said: "Independent research into the first phase of the £400,000 campaign, which included photographs of Hever Castle, Botany Bay and the Goods Shed at Canterbury, revealed a 47:1 return on investment between May and October, last year.

"They generated 79,000 additional overnight trips and short breaks to the county, 221,260 additional visitor nights worth almost £11m, and 196,375 day trips from outside Kent, with visitors spending £7,853,000.



ARTISTIC: Creative Quarter in Folkestone

"Furthermore, but not included in the economic impact figures, the campaign encouraged Kent and Medway residents to take more overnight trips and day trips within the county with a total value of just under £11m."

Businesses across the county are being urged to support the Kent Contemporary brand.

Speaking at the launch of the Visit Kent brand toolkit at the Turner Contemporary last week, M&C Saatchi ad expert Alice McEvoy explained the thinking behind the campaign.

She said: "We know from research that when people consider taking a short break or holiday, Kent is often overlooked in favour of other areas.

"So in order to increase the number of visitors, we know we need to change and improve the perception of the county as a desirable place to visit. We decided to use the strength and power of 'Kent, the Garden of England' but with 'use your garden' as a way to present the county in a more modern, relevant and contemporary way.

"The campaign, with its stunning images, provides a creative inspiration for all of us who market Kent to visitors. But we can't do everything. We need the help and involvement of businesses across the county.

"If we all tell the same story, it will add up to a much more powerful image for Kent. And that means more awareness, more impact and more visitors."

• ***The Kent Contemporary images were taken by photographer Jean Luc Bernard.***

Minister's Pfizer site assurance to MP

SCIENCE minister David Willetts has said Pfizer's Sandwich site will have an "active" and "great" future. Mr Willetts gave the assurance in Parliament after Thanet South MP Laura Sandys asked what his vision was for the research-and-development base and its employees.

He admitted the closure posed a "very serious challenge" but said the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills was doing its best to tackle the problem.

Mr Willetts suggested the site could be developed and used by multiple small research businesses, enabling it to benefit from the new trend emerging in the pharmaceutical sector, where outsourcing to smaller R&D companies is taking place. Ms Sandys said the minister was pushing to ensure east Kent remained a world-renowned centre for research.

She said: "The economic task force – formed to secure investment and attract businesses to the site – has met for the second time.

"Within the next 30 days, we have committed to produce a comprehensive report on all the possible options for the site.

"All the important steps have been taken and with the support of east Kent MPs I am committed to ensuring the jobs stay in the area and that we maximise the huge potential of what is a state-of-the-art site."

Pfizer workers raised a number of concerns during an employment law question-and-answer session. Barrister Paul Tapsell, from Becket Chambers in Canterbury, spoke to employees about redundancy, the consultation process, compensation packages and legal advice.

A spokesman at Fosters Law, which has offices in Broadstairs, Canterbury and Herne Bay, said staff who attended the meeting in Ramsgate raised a number of concerns, including relocation, issues with transfers and the differences between statutory and contractual compensation packages.

Some 2,400 jobs are at risk after the pharmaceutical giant announced it was pulling out of Sandwich, but the figure is expected to be much higher when taking into account contracts such as cleaning and catering. This could push the figure as high as 5,400.

Comment

THE Turner Contemporary story will enter a new chapter when it finally opens in two months' time. From that moment, all talk of the gallery's drawn-out transition from conception to concrete – a process that has taken more than a decade – will become redundant.

As soon as the first visitor steps through the door, the only relevant question, from a strictly business position, will be whether it works as a sustainable tourist attraction.

Turner Contemporary chiefs have talked up the gallery's appeal, claiming it will draw 156,000 visitors a year to east Kent.

Assuming this figure is correct, that works out as 3,000 Turner tourists every week.

While I don't doubt the gallery's pulling power, I question whether Margate as a whole is ready to accommodate its new guests to such an extent that they'll want to make a repeat visit.

Tellingly, the Turner team have identified this concern as a major factor in the overall success of the cultural project.

Chairman of trustees John Kampfner spoke last week of his vision of east Kent becoming one of Europe's top cultural destinations.

But at the same time he warned that this dream was threatened by bad service from Turner Contemporary's supporting tourist industries – bars, cafés, taxis, hotels, restaurants and so on.

Kampfner pointed to the example of Bilbao, which has been rejuvenated since the Guggenheim Museum opened in 1997.

Maybe I'm being cynical, but I fear it will taken more than a new gallery and 'service with a smile' to transform visitors' impressions of Margate's tourist offerings from ageing arcades and a run-down beachfront to capital of culture.

Let's hope I'm wrong and that the visitors flock to Turner and the seaside in their thousands for many years to come.

Time well tell, starting when the gallery opens its doors for the first time on Saturday, April 16.

BUSINESS EDITOR, SIMON ROBINSON
Twitter @KOSbusiness



GAME ON: From left, Richard Marshall of NatWest, ICON MD John Francis, SLS Group MD Giles Stanford, Dave Weller of ICON and Richard Gower of NatWest

Winning combination

BRANDING business ICON has completed its acquisition of events firm SLS Group.

The Kent-based company, which operates in the sports, commercial and cultural markets, bought the company in a £1 million deal.

Managing director John Francis said: "ICON have worked with SLS on high-profile events, including last year's Ryder Cup, and have been aware for some time of the quality of their work and people.

"We are delighted to have been able to agree this acquisition and are confident SLS will enhance our offering to both new and existing clients."

The acquisition went ahead with £500,000 support from NatWest.

The bank's business development director Richard Marshall said: "Having supported ICON with their management buyout in October, 2008, we know the team well so didn't hesitate to support the acquisition of SLS Group. With the support of my colleague Richard Gower in Maidstone, we have seen continued growth on the back of successful strategies and wish them well."

Operating from its HQ in Sidcup, ICON employs 80 full-time staff based in the UK and overseas, working with clients from concept through to production and on-site implementation.

It has an impressive client list, including international and domestic cricket, FIFA, Wimbledon and the Ryder Cup, all served from their UK, Germany, Qatar, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and South Africa offices.



INTERACTIVE: Gordon Henderson with web assistant Jess McMahon

Online access and advice

TORY Gordon Henderson has become the first MP to launch a dedicated business website.

The Swale representative set up the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Business Link (www.blinkss.co.uk) last week.

Mr Henderson said he hoped the site would give business people access to the latest industry news and provide an immediate means of contacting him.

He said: "One of my top priorities will be to help local companies get through the economic challenge our country faces. As and when the economic climate improves, I want those businesses to be better placed to expand and provide the jobs people need. One of the ways in which I can achieve that goal is by ensuring local business people have easy access to advice and are able to get quick answers to questions they have about Government policy.

"As a first step I have set up the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Business Link website to provide the local business community with a direct line to me."



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Kent Business School



A quick pitch at the science park



BUSINESS was in the air at the county's inaugural speed-networking event.

Following the format of speed-dating nights, each attendee was given a two-minute slot to pitch their company to potential clients before moving on the next seat. It is hoped the event at Kent Science Park, near Sittingbourne, will lead to lasting connections.

James Lanby, of Larkings Chartered Accountants, said: "The format was perfect for making contacts I might not have had a chance to speak to otherwise. The event was very well organised and Kent Science Park is a great venue."

Speed-networking events will be a regular feature of Kent Science Park's calendar, on the third Wednesday of every month.

Email jen.francis@ksp-uk.com for details.

BUSINESS WEEK

online: www.businessforkent.co.uk

LOCATE in Kent has reached a new business landmark. The company has now helped 700 firms relocate or expand in the county since 1997, assisting in the creation of 26,000 jobs in the process.

One of the most recent out-of-county companies to turn to Locate in Kent for assistance was Jefferson Hunt.

The employment screening firm has moved from Essex to Wateringbury, near Maidstone, and plans to increase its workforce to about 20 within the next 12 months. The firm's Angus Buchanan praised Locate in Kent for its help with the company's move.

"During my three-year search for property in the county, Locate in Kent provided invaluable support and assistance and lists of properties to view," he said. "The agency is an excellent source of information and I was able to call on them when I needed to procure local services and was given excellent contacts, including IT and telecoms."

THE latest farming and fruit-growing products will be on display next week at the inaugural Agri-Expo South East show. The Detling Showground one-day event will feature more than 110 stands.

A spokesman said: "The day will concentrate on showing the farming community the latest products and innovations in the industry with a particular emphasis on fruit-growing.

"It will be an opportunity for farmers and growers to evaluate the benefits of new equipment, talk to manufacturers' representatives and see rival products side by side."

The Agri-Expo takes place on Tuesday.

FOUR sixth-formers have reached the regional finals of a national investment competition after making a killing on the stock market.

The Rainham School For Girls team, made up of Elwira Mroczko, Saira Sheikh, Henna Khan and Jaspreet Sandhu, returned a £21,000 profit on their original £100,000 virtual cash fund during a three-month period buying and selling shares on the FTSE 100.

Their succession of shrewd investments saw them placed 12th out of the 7,460 entrants across the country. They now move on to the South East finals. The overall winner will receive an all-expenses trip to New York, £2,000 for their school and £200 for each team member.

A NEW £14 million recycling plant will open in Swanley next month. The Ideal Waste Paper Co facility will create more than 60 jobs. The official opening is on Friday, March 4.

A spokesman for the family firm said: "This recycling plant is part of the company's expansion strategy to deliver high-quality, recyclable waste streams to avoid landfill. It will also have environmental benefits with a reduction in carbon miles."

A FREE event next month will offer businesses guidance on how to access grants from a 50 billion euro European Union pot.

The one-day workshop will explain how to use Framework 7 (FP7) to apply for cash to co-finance research, technological development and demonstration projects.

The event will be at Kent Science Park, near Sittingbourne, on Tuesday, March 8.

Site director James Speck said: "Getting funding is nearly always the crucial barrier to hi-tech research, and we all hope this workshop will encourage individuals with the expertise and big ideas to apply for money from the European pot.

"Kent has a great pedigree in R&D and we are keen to see that continue."

To register, call Jen Francis on 01795 506321 or email jen.francis@ksp-uk.com.

Turner the tide



STUNNING: Margate's Turner Contemporary gallery opens in April, providing opportunities and challenges for east Kent tourism

TURNER Contemporary bosses have called on east Kent businesses to help turn the area into one of Europe's top cultural destinations, ***writes Simon Robinson***.

The plea was made at Visit Kent's investors' meeting, at the Margate gallery on Thursday, February 17.

Speaking ahead of the venue's April launch, chairman of trustees John Kampfner said it was up to local businesses to ensure Turner Contemporary's expected 156,000 annual visitors came back to the area.

"This is a truly international venture we are about to unleash on the world," he said.

"Whatever you think will be the ramifications for tourism in east Kent, double it and add some more.

"Turner Contemporary will bring people from all over the world to the area. The decision these tourists then take whether or not to come back will be based on what the community can offer.

"We have the potential to build something wonderful, but for every cold cup of coffee served and surly bed-and-breakfast worker people encounter one tourist will not come back.

"It's up to us to turn east Kent into one of Europe's top cultural destinations."

Turner Contemporary director Victoria Pomery said: "The arts have a key role in the Kent economy during 2011.

"Not only do we open, but there is the second Folkestone Triennial, the Marlowe Theatre reopens and the Canterbury Festival is working with arts organisations for their outdoor Blink event.

"There are also lots of other organisations doing great things in Kent. We are looking to draw 156,000 visitors to Turner Contemporary each year – that's our target and we're confident we can achieve it.

"Turner is going to benefit everyone – regionally, nationally and internationally."

Situated on Margate seafront, at the same site JMW Turner stayed when visiting the town, the Turner Contemporary will be the South East's largest exhibition space outside London when it opens on Saturday, April 16.

Castle's planned winter-hours cut alarms port

TOURISM chiefs have warned of the harmful impact that temporarily closing Dover Castle could have on the port's hospitality industry.

The business support manager at Channel Chamber of Commerce, Roger Walkden, said plans by English Heritage to close during winter weekdays could leave many accommodation and retail businesses struggling through the colder months.

Although the former B&B owner admitted many tourists travelled straight to the castle without coming to the town, he said businesses would still feel the strain.

"In the summer they do reasonably well, but there are still bills to pay in the winter," he said.

"The impact will be felt in accommodation, hospitality and retail businesses. I don't think it will necessarily lead to them closing down, although some may come close to it. Some will really struggle."

Detrimental

Margaret Reidy, of Number One Guest House in Castle Street, said: "Most people feel it's going to have a detrimental effect."

English Heritage is consulting staff on plans to restrict winter opening at Dover Castle to weekends after a 32 per cent cut in Government grants. It could mean the loss of 40 jobs at the castle.

English Heritage says that just 13 per cent of the castle's annual visitors were outside the summer season, but with 355,000 visiting between 2009 and 2010, this figure is still a high 46,000.

A spokesman said English Heritage regularly reviewed its opening hours.

"Having looked at visitor patterns, and bearing in mind the 32 per cent cut to our grant in future years, English Heritage is proposing to adjust winter opening times with effect from November.

"Over the next three months, English Heritage will be consulting with staff about these proposed changes."

A decision will be made at the end of the three-month consultation period.



LIGHT FANTASTIC: View from inside the Turner Contemporary

FSB jobs plea to Coalition

THE Federation of Small Businesses has called on the Treasury to help counter the county's above-average rise in unemployment.

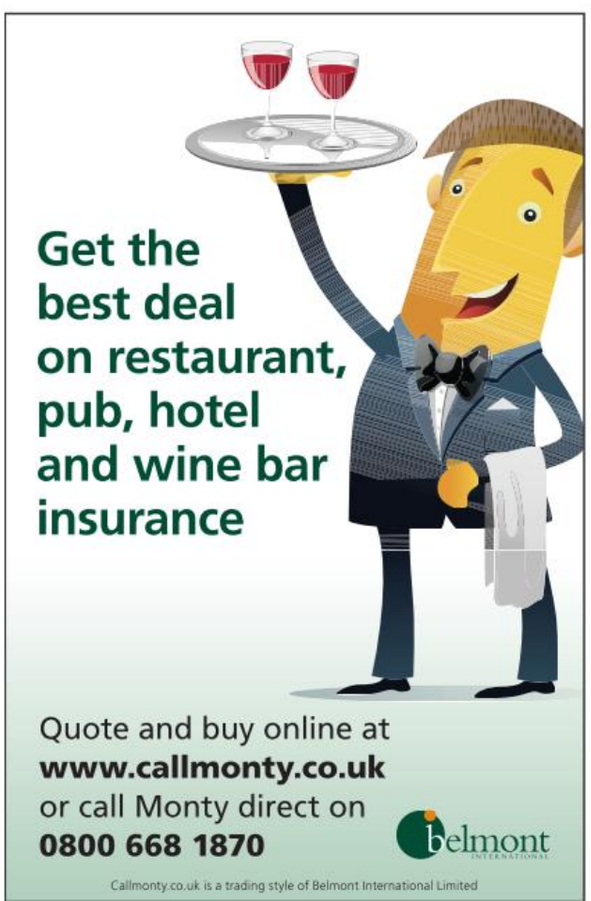
The call comes after figures revealed there had been a 6 per cent increase in the number of Kent workers joining the dole queue – three times higher than the national average.

This surge in unemployment does not take into effect Pfizer's decision to close its Sandwich site, leaving 2,400 jobs at risk, and far-reaching public sector cuts.

FSB Kent and Medway chairman Roger House said: "We are calling on Kent MPs, in particular those in the deprived areas of the county, to persuade the Treasury to grant the National Insurance contribution benefit available in the west and the north of the UK to be applied in Kent to incentivise small businesses to take on new staff and boost employment opportunities.

"If the Government is serious about the private sector and small businesses pulling the country out of recession, it cannot continue to regulate and suck finance out of businesses.

"They must create a commercial environment where business in valued and is confident to expand and create new jobs."



BUSINESS WEEK
online: www.businessforkent.co.uk



Eastern brewing promise fulfilled to Sheps' delight

SHEPHERD Neame picked up a gold and two silver awards at the brewing 'Oscars'.

The Faversham firm won gold and silver in the keg-lager category, for Japanese lager Asahi and Chinese Sun Lik.

Both are brewed under licence in Kent.

Sheps' Whitstable Bay Organic Ale claimed the silver award in the small-pack ale category.

Production and distribution director Tom Falcon said: "We're delighted to have been rewarded with three medals in such a prestigious and long-running awards scheme.

"We brew Asahi and Sun Lik to meet the exacting standards of our international partners, and it's fantastic to see our brewers recognised for this. We are pleased to see one of own Kentish ales selected as a winner, too."

The Brewing Industry International Awards are now in their 125th year. This year there were almost 800 entries across nine categories, divided into 32 classes according to alcohol content.

The awards were judged at the National Brewery Centre in Burton-upon-Trent.

A presentation ceremony will take place at Guildhall, London, on April 12.

Sheps has also been short-listed for a prize at the Enjoy England Awards for Excellence.

The Kent company has been named as a finalist in the small visitor attraction of the year category and is up against three other tourist destinations for the accolade.

Shepherd Neame visitor centre manager Graham Hukins said: "We are delighted to have been announced as finalists for this national award. This is a real boost for the team, who have worked exceptionally hard to provide a first-class experience for our visitors."

Attractions are reviewed by independent assessors and judged by industry experts. The overall winners of each category will be announced at a ceremony in Birmingham on Friday, April 15.

Driven man has

KOSmedia BUSINESS WEEK
THE BIG INTERVIEW

Autotrader co-founder Paul Gibbons's above-par sales and marketing efforts have allowed him the time to focus on achieving below-par golf scores.

The former sausage salesman honed his selling craft at the Reading Evening Post before launching the Thames Valley Trader – the template for the national Autotrader publication – with colleague John Madejski, current chairman of Reading FC.

After the pair sold their publishing firm in 1998, he moved into the world of golf and set about building his four-course portfolio. He told Business Editor SIMON ROBINSON how both a careers adviser and newspaper proprietor Eddy Shah had a hand in securing his success


PAUL GIBBONS

GOLF-COURSE-owner Paul Gibbons has the misguided fears of his school careers adviser to thank in part for his hugely successful business career.

After dismissing Gibbons's preferred professions – a chef or a tailor – as skills soon to be lost to industrial machines, he pointed the 15-year-old to Reading high street and told him to get a job in retail.

The young Gibbons took heed of the careers officer's somewhat skewed advice and in doing so found his true calling in sales and marketing.

For while the chef and tailoring trades may have lost a good worker, it's unlikely these professions would have led Gibbons to the lofty position he finds himself in today as the joint owner of Leaderboard, a holding company he and his wife run and that boasts four top golf courses, two four-star hotels and a state-of-the-art driving range.

It is in the plush clubhouse of Gibbons's sole Kent club, the 200-acre Chart Hills course, near Biddenden, that I ask the 63-year-old how he came to take his first step into the world of business.

"The careers officer told me not to become a chef as everything would soon be pre-packed food. As for tailoring, he said the skill would soon be gone, that it would all be done with machinery and that I didn't want to work in a factory. He told me to go and get a job in the high street. So I went to Burtons. I enjoyed what I was doing and quickly realised that selling and marketing was what I wanted to do."

After further honing his teenage selling talents flogging sausages and pies, then televisions and white goods, Gibbons got a job at the Reading Evening Post.

It was here he learned and mastered the craft of selling. He said: "I took on every sales and marketing course they had going and over time moved through all the classified and run-of-paper departments.

"I was the leading salesman for the Evening Post's publishers, Thames Regional Newspapers, for three years in a row, which I think is quite an achievement. I'm proud of that."

When asked how he had managed to reign supreme as the department's top seller, Gibbons said: "One of the biggest parts of selling is listening. Quite often you hear someone say 'He's got to be a good salesman, he's got the gift of the gab' – but it's not actually true.

"It's the guy who can ask the right question, listen for the answer and use that answer to help him achieve his objective who is the best seller."


BUNKER MENTALITY: Green at the fourth

HAVING mastered the art of newspaper sales, Gibbons was ready for his next challenge. It would turn out to be a multi-million-pound move as Gibbons and Evening Post sales colleague John Madejski, now the chairman of Reading FC, launched the Thames Valley Trader – a precursor to what is now known as the Autotrader.

Gibbons said: "I'd known John for about six years. We worked in the same office and decided we wanted to go into business together. The only problem was that we didn't know quite what to do. John went on holiday to California and brought back a very basic idea of Trader."

The pair pushed ahead with this plan and set up their own company, Hurst Publishing.

Gibbons said: "The biggest marketplace in Reading at that time was secondhand cars, so we decided that this was the industry we needed to move into.

"The problem was that we blindly thought the whole world was waiting for the product, so we had 200,000 leaflets explaining who we were and what we were doing distributed and then just waited for the phone to ring.

"It didn't. We were two weeks away from the launch date and slowly realised we had to go and sell the whole thing. We were working seven days a week.

"Monday was deadline day and Tuesday was spent at the typesetter's, reading the pages off. We'd hit the road on Wednesday to Friday, selling from 8.30am, before cold-calling anyone who was selling their cars in the local newspaper, from 6.30pm to 9.30pm.

"Then on Saturday and Sunday we'd go out and take photos. We grafted. It was tough, but it worked."

The first edition of the Thames Valley Trader was 24 pages. It sold 2,000 copies.

The next 18 months were similar seven-day week slogs.

The publishing pair's breakthrough came via Manchester-based newsman Eddy Shah's confrontations with the unions at his Warrington print works in 1983.

Gibbons explained: "When Eddy took on the unions, the whole industry up there was going on strike and other papers in the South would go on strike to support. Our typesetters were non-union and the printers were non-union, so we always published, even when papers in the area were all on strike.

"The garages had to advertise somewhere during these strikes, so we started putting on eight pages a week.

"We had been going for 18 months doing 56 pages per week. After two years we were up to 80/90 pages and then we were away.

"It took us 18 months of graft and concern trying to hold it up, but we had made it when Eddy took on the unions.

"I played golf with him here at Chart Hills



come to golfing fore

about five years ago and the first thing I did was shake his hand and thank him.

"He said he wanted a share of the profits, but I told him he was too late."

AUTOTRADER went national in 1982. Hurst Publishing had 52 titles by the time it was sold in 1998 for £260 million, at which point Gibbons took a well-deserved break.

He said: "I sold the business and went abroad for three months to think about what I wanted to do.

"I came back and decided to get my golf together. I was having golf lessons at my local club when the pro asked me if I was going to buy Sandford Springs course in Hampshire.

"I went and had a look with my wife Jennifer, who was keen for me to take it on.

"Whether she just wanted me out the house I'm not sure. I believed golf could be saleable. It's very much a saleable product.

"Unfortunately, I came in just at the peak of the market, at the point when golf was going to take a slide. A report in the 1980s said there were not enough clubs in the country, and there were 50 people waiting to get on the books of each club.

"What people hadn't realised was that people were signing three or four waiting lists.

"So all these golf clubs were built and then there weren't enough people to play them. It became a competitive marketplace in the wrong direction.

"Clubs tried to compete on price rather than quality and reputation. What we've done is get a high level of consistency on both the course and in the clubhouse.

"I've based everything on what I would want as an amateur golfer and a business executive. Priority No 1 is making sure our course is in the best condition any time of the year.

"Priority No 1 A is to make sure the clubhouse is as good as it can be, that the staff want to show it that way as well and that the service is top-drawer."

Gibbons's golf company, Leaderboard, bought Chart Hills in 2001. The club was redesigned by six-times Major winner Sir Nick Faldo and reopened in August, 2003. Among its signature features are a unique island green on the par-three 17th hole and 130 bunkers, including 'The Anaconda' on the fifth hole, which at 200 yards is the longest bunker in Europe.

The course is bracing itself for the arrival of thousands of golfing fans to the area next year when The Open is held in Sandwich.



ROUGH AND SMOOTH: The first hole at the Sir Nick Faldo-designed Chart Hills course

Gibbons said: "I think the Open will bring an awful lot to the area and Kent in particular.

"It will create revenue for the area of at least £30m. Foreign golf fans will flock into the UK, joined by fans from across the country and these people will all want accommodation, transport, food and drink while they're here. We're already taking bookings and on one day we're fully booked."

Gibbons's latest venture is the Leaderboard golf website, which includes news and a range of video tutorials. It was launched exactly 34 years after Gibbons set up Trader, something he insists came about completely by chance.

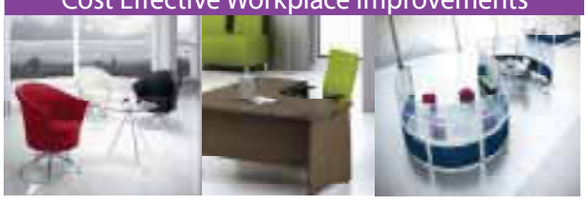
As omens go, that's a fairly good one.

PAUL'S TOP TIPS

- Work hard, with full commitment to success
- Know your product inside out
- Know your marketplace and how your product sits within it
- Know all the benefits and unique selling points of your product
- Borrow from the bank as close to zero as you can get
- Always resist giving or selling shares, but instead offer a percentage of the profit as a bonus on a short-term scheme
- If you can achieve the above, then you should always be happy and enjoy working for yourself



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Insolvency trend shows slight fall

THE latest insolvency figures show a 3 per cent fall in Kent bankruptcy petitions.

The Ministry of Justice statistics reveal that in the three months to December 2010 there were 362 cases of business people declaring themselves bankrupt, down on the same period in the previous year.

Tunbridge Wells reported a decrease of 37 per cent, but Medway saw a 39 per cent rise, equating to 121 applications. Across England and Wales, there was a 22 per cent drop in people petitioning for their own bankruptcy, to 10,646 cases. Throughout 2010 as a whole, the figures show the overall number of bankruptcy petitions fell by more than 14 per cent compared with 2009.

Chris Nutting, director of personal insolvency at KPMG, said: "While it is encouraging that the headline figures show overall bankruptcy numbers have dropped, it should not be taken as evidence that people have solved their financial problems.

"Statistics released by the Insolvency Service last week showed that alternative insolvency procedures such as Individual Voluntary Arrangements (IVAs) and Debt Relief Orders (DROs) have had dramatic increases, leading to record numbers of personal insolvencies in 2010.

"At the same time, our research has shown creditors are losing £20 million a day due to insolvencies. As well as an increase in personal insolvency numbers, there is evidence that more people are turning to informal arrangements, such as debt-management plans, with their creditors.

"As the demand for impartial debt advice increases, it's a shame there are dramatic cuts to the funding for the free debt advice sector.

"As household budgets come under increasing pressure, it is vital that people speak to creditors at the earliest opportunity to find practical solutions to their underlying financial problems."

Stimulating meeting of minds aims to put Gateway in the zone



LOCAL ANGLE: KCC leader Paul Carter

By **SIMON ROBINSON**

simon.robinson@kosmedia.co.uk

THAMES Gateway bosses have discussed plans to turn the north Kent corridor into a new economic development zone.

The proposal was outlined at the first meeting of the locally-led Thames Gateway Strategic Group (TGSG) – made up of politicians and business leaders – at Canary Wharf, London.

Kent County Council leader Paul Carter said the group could help secure "economic prosperity" for the area.

"The Thames Gateway has enormous economic potential which can bring prosperity and jobs to north Kent," he said.

Potential

"By unlocking its potential with new infrastructure – including a third Thames Crossing – and encouraging development, we can create an additional 113,000 jobs in north Kent and south Essex over the next 20 years. It will be the task of the group to get things moving to secure economic prosperity for the area to benefit local businesses and people.

"By working together, we can find new ways of financing this growth, generating new inward investment and increasing the skills of the local workforce."

Thames Gateway minister Bob Neill praised the group for its initiative in driving growth in the region.

He said: "I'm delighted that for the first time local-authority leaders and business partners have come together to take charge of growing the Thames Gateway.

"Their first key decision – to bid for the Thames Gateway to become an economic development zone – is a bold proposal that would incentivise the area's growth, rather than relying on Government grants.



GATEWAY: Coalition minister Bob Neill

"It shows the new thinking that is coming from freeing partners from central government diktat, which I welcome. I will now work with the group to open formal discussions with my colleagues across Government. I look forward to working with the group in the months and years ahead. I'm sure we'll see many more proposals from the new group which will stimulate economic growth benefiting all the Thames Gateway's communities."

After the meeting, a TSGS joint statement read: "The decisions taken at our first meeting show our commitment and that we mean business.

"Just as it took an enterprise zone to help Canary Wharf to become the powerhouse of London, we are now calling for a new type of economic development zone to carry on building on the work that has already taken place in the Thames Gateway."



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Crackdown on tax-credit fraud

FRAUDULENT self-employed tax-credit claimants are being targeted by HM Revenue and Customs.

HMRC teams have been examining tax-credit awards being paid to the self-employed and are writing to any whose claims may not be genuine or accurate.

Kent's 17,800 self-employed tax-credit claimants are being warned that they face a penalty if they fail to tell HMRC promptly of any changes in income and, in the case of deliberate fraud, criminal prosecution and imprisonment.

Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury David Gauke said: "HMRC is determined to take a tough approach to fraud by tax credit claimants.

"Last year the Government launched proposals to reduce the billions lost to tax credit error and fraud every year. These losses are unaffordable and unacceptable."

HMRC will use credit-reference agencies and data-matching to spot patterns of fraud.

The department is also employing additional investigators and are examining each claim in high-fraud areas.

Enterprising spirit of youth

A YOUTH enterprise scheme could add up to £360,000 to the county's economy over the next three years, a new report has revealed, ***writes Simon Robinson***.

The Prince's Trust Enterprise Programme has supported more than 330 unemployed 18- to 30-year-olds in the South East – including 72 in Kent – since its launch in January, 2010.

Bosses at the youth charity are now urging local government, businesses and individuals across the county to offer more support and funding, saying it could give the Kent economy a boost.

The charity's report, entitled Today's Young People – Tomorrow's Economy, estimates the scheme could add up to £1.6 million to the South East economy in three years, with Kent accounting for £360,000 of that amount.

The sum takes into account the potential financial benefits of helping local young people into jobs or starting them up in business in terms of earnings. On top of this figure, there are savings to the public purse in terms of Jobseeker's Allowance.

The Prince's Trust's London and South East enterprise head Ben Marson said: "The growing success of our Enterprise Programme shows that young people in Kent are very entrepreneurial. By harnessing their enthusiasm for enterprise, not only will the public purse save on benefits, but Kent's economy stands to gain through young people's skills and talents.

"Now we need further funds to support more young people across the region, helping them escape long-term unemployment and poverty for good.

"Many of these young people will become the employers of tomorrow, providing services Kent needs. By helping today's young people, we are investing in tomorrow's economy."



PRINCE CHARLES

CASE STUDY 1



BECKY Ashton, 24, is a trained dance teacher but found it impossible to get work when she moved to Chatham just over a year ago.

She was out of work for a depressing six months and found it extremely difficult to get a job. She said: "I moved to a new area to be with my partner and underestimated how hard it would be to find work. I started applying for all kinds of jobs, but hardly anything was available due to the recession and I was getting increasingly desperate."

Becky felt guilty for relying on her family for support and started to worry about money and her future.

Becky felt setting up her own dance company could be the solution but had no idea about how to run a business. She decided to approach The Prince's Trust, which runs an enterprise programme to help unemployed young people gain the skills and confidence to set up their own businesses.

As part of the programme, Becky attended a four-day Explore Enterprise course, which taught essential skills such as how to write a business plan, how to manage accounts and how to get funding. She decided to name her business the Right Step Dance Company and was awarded a start-up loan and a business mentor.

Becky said: "My mentor has been incredibly helpful. As an ex-banker, he has been able to help me manage my money better and has given me the confidence to do things I wouldn't have considered before. He has also introduced me to important business contacts."

Within a few months, Becky had developed contacts with several schools and care homes and was awarded funding as part of a fitness campaign run by a supermarket chain.

She said: "Having my own business and my own website suddenly made people take notice of me."

Today, Right Step is a hugely successful community dance company, teaching dance in schools, dance clubs, care homes and children's centres across Kent. Becky has four other dance teachers working with her on a self-employed basis.

In just seven months, Becky has transformed her life, and she now wants to help other aspiring dance teachers to do the same. She has a young dance teacher shadowing her whom she hopes will be able to her own classes soon.

Becky said: "Working as a dance teacher is so rewarding. It's great to see how much my students, who range from five to 99 years old, enjoy their lessons. I'm really excited about seeing my company grow and really grateful to The Prince's Trust for helping me to do something I love."

CASE STUDY 2

MARIE Simpson, 27, from Medway, was unemployed for nine months after being made redundant from her job as a hairdresser in February, 2009.

At the time, few salons were taking on staff and Marie became increasingly worried about being out of work.

She said: "I had a young daughter to look after and it was very difficult trying to get by on Income Support alone. I applied for so many jobs, but all the salons were cutting back on staff."

Marie knew she needed to be back at work and found being home all day depressing. She said: "Some days, I would take my daughter to school and then go back to bed because there was nothing else to do."

Marie realised setting up her own hairdressing business could be the only solution but had no idea where to start. However, when a friend started The Prince's Trust Enterprise Programme, she decided to sign up.

Prince's Trust

She said: "I went on a four-day Explore Enterprise course which was really inspiring. For the first time, I felt like setting up my own business was something I could actually achieve."

After the course, Marie decided to set up Distinct Styles, a mobile hairdressing business in Medway. She was given a business mentor who was able to advise on all areas of running a business.

Marie said: "I couldn't have set up my business without a mentor. She is always there to listen to my ideas, calm me down and answer any questions. A year later, I still call her all the time."

Distinct Styles is now a successful business and Marie is in talks with local salon Flash Divas to work with them in their photographic studio a few days a week. She is also keen to help other young people and teaches hairdressing.

Marie said: "I'm so grateful to The Prince's Trust for helping me to start up my own business. I'm proud of what I've achieved so far and would like to use my experience to help other young people find work."

CASE STUDY 3

RACHEL Hamlin, from Margate, always dreamed of becoming a singer and spent years working in holiday parks around the UK.

However, she had to give up work when her daughter was born and found it impossible to combine her love of singing with the reality of life as a single mum. She was unemployed for just under a year and didn't know what to do next.

She said: "I was living on benefits and staying at home all day. I had vey little self-respect and no pride in what I was doing."

Rachel, 26, came up with a plan to set up her own singing duo, In Demand, which would tour in pubs, clubs and holiday parks around the country. She felt running her own business would make it easier to work around looking after her daughter, as she would be able to choose when and where she worked. Rachel had no idea how to run a business but was put in touch with The Prince's Trust via Business Link.

She said: "The trust's enterprise course course was fantastic. It taught me so much – such as how to write a business plan and manage accounts and taxes. Without this support, my idea to set up In Demand would have remained just that – an idea."

Less than a year after joining the Enterprise Programme, Rachel's duo has become a huge success, and In Demand have 46 gigs lined up over the next year.

Rachel said: "Running my own business means I can take my daughter along to rehearsals and fit work around being a mum."

Rachel hopes to set up her own entertainment agency, representing singers, comedians and magicians. She said: "One day, I hope I'll be able to help other young people find work in the entertainment industry."

This time last year, Rachel was unemployed and on Income Support. Today, she runs a successful business doing something she has always been passionate about.

She said: "Getting to this stage has been a lot of hard work, but I wouldn't have been able to do it without the help of The Prince's Trust. I would advise any young person hoping to set up their own business to get in touch with the charity."



IN DEMAND: Rachel, below, with Aimee Louise March

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NEXT WEEK: Spotlight on international business

Skinner braves muddy course to clinch silver

A GUTSY run in difficult conditions saw Michael Skinner finish runner-up in the senior men's race at the National Cross Country Championships last weekend.

Heavy rain turned the course at Alton Towers into a quagmire and the men's race was reduced from 12 kilometres to 10k over health and safety fears.

Skinner and Stockport's Scott Vernon quickly broke free of the enormous field containing more than 1,000 runners.



RUNNER-UP: Michael Skinner

Vernon eventually broke clear, but Skinner held on to come home second in the biggest domestic cross-country event of the season. The 31-year-old's result was the best by a Blackheath & Bromley athlete since Sydney Wooderson won the title in 1948.

There was also significant success in the junior ranks, where Tonbridge reinforced their reputation as one of the country's leading cross-country clubs by equalling their best ever showing at the championships.

The only club to enter a team in all 10 races, Tonbridge left with four team medals to underline their status as a national force in the junior ranks.

There were also encouraging signs in the older age groups, with the senior men recording their highest finish in club history. Sam Bradley was the first home, finishing 127th in a huge field of more than 1,300 runners, as Tonbridge's team came 17th of 95 entries.

The club's under-15 and under-17 teams finished the season unbeaten by taking gold medals. Max Nicholls won the only individual medal, finishing second to lead the under-15s to glory. There was a silver medal for the under-13 boys, while the under-15 girls took bronze.

Barham's battle with his great expectations

Benn on the long road back after cancer scare

By DAVID PRITCHARD

AHEAD of his return to competitive golf next month, Benn Barham admits one of the biggest challenges will be keeping a lid on his own expectations.

The 35-year-old is stepping up his recovery after having a kidney containing a cancerous tumour removed in November. Now able to play up to three times a week at Chart Hills, near his home in Tenterden, progress is slow but steady.

The focus is on rejoining tournament golf at the end of next month. The Kenya Open on the Challenge Tour is the most likely destination, although he is hopeful of securing an invite to play in the Andalucia Open on the main European Tour a week earlier.

Barham, who rates his condition at only around 70 per cent, is keen to return as soon as possible, but concedes it will be a while before he can reasonably expect to reach his best form.

"It's going to take time," he said. "I knew before it happened it was going to be hard work and take some dedication, but I'm up for the challenge.

"My nature is I want to do really well straight away, but I need to be realistic. I haven't played four rounds in a row yet, that's a milestone I need to get over.

"I think realistically it won't be until the middle of the summer before I can get back to feeling I can compete. That's quite a tough thing to take because I want to hit the ground running."

If all goes to plan it could mean Barham begins to see improvements in time for Open qualification in June. His world ranking may be enough to allow entry to the European leg of International Final Qualifying, held at Sunningdale, while the other option is to go through one of 16 regional events.

With The Open coming to Kent in July it offers a powerful motivation for Barham, who has played in the event at Muirfield and Carnoustie, but never on his doorstep.

He said: "I would dearly love to play in any Open, but more so when it's Royal St George's. I just missed out when it was last here, finished 20th at Loch Lomond, one shot away from making it, so it would be great to get there this year."

COUNTDOWN TO THE OPEN

137 DAYS UNTIL THE OPEN – THE NUMBER OF SHOTS TAKEN BY BRIAN WATTS IN THE OPENING TWO ROUNDS TO LEAD AT THE HALFWAY STAGE OF THE 1998 OPEN AT ROYAL BIRKDALE. THE AMERICAN WENT ON TO LOSE A PLAY-OFF TO COMPATRIOT MARK O'MEARA



Picture: ADY KERRY

DRIVEN: Benn Barham wants to play well immediately but admits he is a long way from full fitness after having a kidney removed due to a cancerous tumour in November

It's double trouble for Dobriskey

A HECTIC athletics schedule at the London Olympics has ended any lingering hopes Lisa Dobriskey had of attempting a middle-distance double.

There had been some thought the 27-year-old may try to emulate Dame Kelly Holmes' efforts at Athens in 2004, where she won gold in the 800 and 1500 metres.

Dobriskey was already wavering before the Olympic timetable, released last week, effectively ended the debate. In Greece the rounds for the two events were spread out over nine days, three of which were rest days, with the 800m final taking place before the 1500m heats began.

In 2012 anyone attempting the women's middle distance double will face a far more intense schedule. Held over just six days, with only one rest day, the events also overlap with the 800m heats taking place the same day as the 1500m semi-finals.

It was enough for Dobriskey, reigning world silver medallist in the 1500m, to abandon any hopes of multiple glory and the Ashford-born athlete doubts anyone will be successful if they attempt to do the double.

She said: "It's not possible to do both and I think that's the same for everybody. If you were seriously looking to run well in the 1500m [semi-finals] you wouldn't ever do an 800m heat in the morning unless you were more of an 800m runner and that was your speciality, but then I wouldn't see why they would bother with the 1500m.

"I would have only doubled up if the 800m was after the 1500m, so it would only have been to see what happens. In the past the 800m had come before so I don't think it would have seriously been an option, which is a shame."



Picture: ADY KERRY

NO WAY: Lisa Dobriskey has ruled out attempting 800m and 1500m Olympic double in 2012

The focus for this year is on peaking at the World Championships in South Korea, in late August, which will act as a final dress rehearsal for the London Olympics. Dobriskey ran competitively for the first time this year in a low key road race in Leicester last weekend, the first of several small events planned before returning to the track in May.

A thigh injury prevented Dobriskey from defending her Commonwealth Games title in October, but confidence is high following the first almost completely injury-free winter in years.

She said: "It makes a massive difference because this winter provides the base for this summer and 2012 as well. The more you can get in the bank the better.

"It has been a struggle the last couple of years so I'm quite fortunate to be in a consistent routine now."

Two risky

DOUBLE Olympic gold medallist Dame Kelly Holmes believes Lisa Dobriskey would be taking a huge risk if she were to attempt running in both the 800 and 1500 metres at the 2012 London Games.



WARNING: Dame Kelly Holmes

Holmes won both events at Athens in 2004, but her success was achieved over nine days, compared to Dobriskey's potentially punishing schedule of six races in six days.

The Ashford athlete has struggled with injuries over the past year and Holmes feels the strain of doubling up at London could prove a bridge too far.

"There's an ability to run but recovery is equally as important," she said. "Doubling up is not the issue, it's what level you want to reach. If you want to medal, you've got to be realistic. Lisa could double up but will she perform really well if she does?

"At world-class level, she's not performed at major championships and doubling-up is a risk you take.

"You can give it a go but you do run the risk of it going completely wrong or being the biggest thing you've ever done in your life."

By DAVID PRITCHARD

Brands' new season

Circuit focuses on best of British after disappointing turnout to last year's international series meetings

THE HIGH cost and relatively low spectator turnout for international racing series at Brands Hatch have prompted circuit bosses to focus on national championships this year.

The World Touring Car Championship (WTCC) and Superleague Formula both visited the West Kingsdown circuit last year, but are not on the 2011 calendar.

It follows the departure of A1GP and World Superbikes in previous years, with September's visit of DTM, the German Touring Car Championship, the only visit from an international series this year.

The highlights instead will again be the ever-popular British Touring Car Championship (BTCC), with races in April and October, and the British Superbike Championship (BSB), which has been increased from two meetings last year to three this season.

Jonathan Palmer, chief executive of Brands owners MotorSport Vision (MSV), does not regret losing the global series, which he felt did not represent good value for money.

He said: "We're not having WTCC now because it just costs too much money. The biggest thing are the fees to the FIA and the MSA and between the two regulatory bodies we had to pay around £160,000 and it was just too big a fee to carry. The level of spectator interest just wasn't high enough to make a profit, we were making heavy losses on it, so we dropped it.

"We are running DTM, which is a great event, but our biggest events are British Superbikes, where we've got an extra meeting, and BTCC is big as well. There is more following and awareness of national racing, BTCC was getting bigger crowds than WTCC because people follow it more closely."

Brands is one of four circuits owned by MSV, who have recently completed a multi-million pound redevelopment of sister circuit Snetterton. The extended track will be used for the first time this season, but Palmer rejected any suggestion the improvements made it a competitor to Brands when hosting the top events.

He said: "Not at all, in fact it's beneficial for Brands Hatch to have our other circuits being strong because it enables us to operate through MSVR [MSV's racing division] more championships ourselves on our own circuits. Oulton Park and Brands have always been very good and to have a third circuit is excellent."

Pictures: NICK DUNGAN





VALUE FOR MONEY: Brands boss Jonathan Palmer (left) hopes the British Touring Car Championship (last year's meeting at Brands pictured) will bring in the punters

MAJOR EVENTS AT BRANDS IN 2011

- March 26-27: BRITISH TRUCK RACING CHAMPIONSHIP
- April 2-3: BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
- April 22-25: BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP
- May 28-30: THE MASTERS HISTORIC FESTIVAL
- June 18-19: BRITISH F3/GT CHAMPIONSHIPS
- June 25-26: MODIFIED LIVE
- July 1-3: HSCC SUPERPRIX WITH HISTORIC FORMULA ONE
- July 22-24: FORMULA TWO AND INTERNATIONAL GT OPEN
- August 5-7: BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP
- September 2-4: DTM (GERMAN TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP)
- October 1-2: BRITISH TOURING CAR CHAMPIONSHIP
- October 7-9: BRITISH SUPERBIKE CHAMPIONSHIP
- October 29-30: BRITISH TRUCK RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Camier in race to be ready for first round

LEON Camier is battling to overcome glandular fever in time for the opening round of the new World Superbike Championship in Australia today.

The Ashford rider has missed large chunks of testing this week after suffering from sickness and dizziness and his place on the first grid of the season is in serious doubt.

Camier, 24, is hoping to better last season's 12th-placed finish in the championship after re-signing for the works Aprilia team, but admitted his preparations for the curtain-raiser at Phillip Island could not have gone worse.

"I don't know how it's going to work out so I've got to try not to expect too much," he said. "The doctors say I've got glandular fever, but there's nothing they can really do about it. It feels like I've got horrific flu, I've got no energy at all and that's not good.

"I did a couple of laps on the first day [of testing] but you've got to be pushing 100 per cent and if you're head and body aren't up to it, you're not going to go fast."

Camier, the 15th-fastest rider in the opening round of testing, saw his 2010 season curtailed prematurely when a broken wrist, suffered at the Nurburgring in Germany, forced him to sit out the final two rounds.



UNWELL: Leon Camier has been struggling with glandular fever this week, making his presence on the grid for the start of the World Superbike Championship this week unlikely

However, the ex-British Superbike champion remains in confident mood ahead of the new campaign despite this week's disruptions.

He said: "I know the bike better and that's definitely positive because I know what to expect. I don't have to worry about things like how the gear box is set up, I can just concentrate on riding faster.

"Our pace was really good in Australia last year so it's frustrating, but this is a championship at the end of the day and you could never guess a situation like this is going to happen."

Pictures: GERARD BROWN



WINNER: Kristian House salutes the crowd on his way to winning the first stage of the Tour of South Africa to net the yellow jersey (inset)

House that for a fast start to the season?

THE CYCLING season began with a bang for Kristian House as he won the opening stage of the Tour of South Africa.

Following an early attack by his Rapha Condor Sharp team, House got in a breakaway and stayed clear of the field all day.

Despite a determined chase from the peloton, the 31-year-old finished 45 seconds ahead of his nearest challenger.

House, the 2009 British road race champion who grew up near Canterbury, was still in the yellow jersey with an advantage of more than two minutes as this newspaper went to press.

Speaking before the race began, House was happy with his preparations for the new campaign.

He said: "I spent the winter out in Austin, Texas, spending time with my family and friends. It's been a few years since I spent that much time there and I really enjoyed it.

"The training was really great. I got back out on the roads that I grew up on and was riding with some of my really good friends. There's a great cycling community in Austin, so it was good to be back involved in that."

The Tour of South Africa finished in Cape Town on Saturday. Log on to www.kentsport.co.uk for details on whether House was able to maintain his advantage.

Hare 'lucky' to be alive after shock heart attack



CHANGES: Darren Hare says his heart attack has made him re-evaluate his life

EXCLUSIVE

By **DAVID PRITCHARD**

Gillingham youth team boss Darren Hare speaks for the first time about his recovery from the heart attack he suffered after a scouting trip and how he stayed awake during emergency treatment

DARREN Hare admits he is lucky to be alive after a routine scouting trip earlier this month ended with the Gillingham youth team coach watching himself undergo emergency heart surgery.

The 43-year-old attended Oxford United's trip at Southend on February 1 as part of the Gills' preparations for facing the U's at Priestfield four days later.

Although Hare was being treated for high blood pressure and had experienced missed heart beats in the preceding weeks, they were nothing to suggest what happened once he got home.

Chest pains

"I got back in from Southend and just started watching TV," he said. "Suddenly I came over all faint and nauseous and then I collapsed. The next thing I knew I woke up on the floor, I knew I had to wake my wife up so I crawled upstairs and by that stage the chest pains had kicked in.

"In a way I was very lucky, if it had been slightly earlier I would have been driving, or the night before my wife would have been at work."

Paramedics immediately diagnosed a heart attack and rushed him to William Harvey Hospital in Ashford. Amazingly, Hare was conscious throughout the operation, watching with a mixture of fascination and horror as dye injected into his bloodstream revealed two arterial blockages on X-rays.

He said: "It was phenomenal to feel the pain drift away while you're laying there on the operating table. It's an experience I don't want to feel again, but it was truly amazing. The next couple of days were very emotional.

"I can't say how well everybody did from start to finish – the emergency services and the absolutely expert treatment I had in the cardiac department at Ashford."

More than 100 get well cards from family, friends and people connected to the Gills have helped the former Dover Athletic assistant manager recover at home in Rainham for the past three weeks. The process has been slow, but he is beginning to make good progress and is able to walk for up to 20 minutes at a time.

The former striker, who turned out for several Kent clubs including Dover and Ashford Town during his playing career and worked as a teacher at The Abbey School in Faversham, is now focused on getting fit enough to get back to work. He hopes to be back within a matter of weeks, but will return a changed man.

Hare said: "While I'm not squeaky clean I'm not a heavy drinker and I didn't think I had a poor diet, but when you're involved in football you have a lot of late nights where you're not eating regularly or as well as you should. Things like that are going to have to change and I'm going to have to make sure I exercise more - once I can.

"In the first instance I've set myself April 1 to come back and I think that's realistic. From then until the end of the season I'll need to take it easy."



Floodlights are a shining example

THESE are the first pictures of the retractable floodlights winched into position at Kent's St Lawrence Ground this week.

It was a symbolic milestone in the club's redevelopment project, which will see the county use permanent floodlights for the first time in its history.

The installation of the lights, which began with the first one going up at the Nackington Road end of the ground on Tuesday morning, means Kent will be able to host floodlight cricket with five fixtures planned this summer.

Elsewhere, director of cricket Paul Farbrace has asked if the club can use the Academy changing rooms should the pavilion at St Lawrence not be ready in time for Kent's opening home game of the season against Gloucestershire in the LV= County Championship on April 26.

Rumours were that the club might have to look at playing at Beckenham if the changing rooms are not finished in time.

Pictures: ADY KERRY



Runs hard to come by for Denly Down Under

KENT opener Joe Denly's struggles with the bat have continued in Australia as the Academy graduate looks to regain the form that earned him a place in the England side two years ago.

The 24-year-old has spent the winter playing for Sydney Cricket Club to work on his game and find some form after a difficult 2010 season in Division One with Kent.

Having struggled to live up to the standards of his first three seasons at St Lawrence, Denly scored 610 championship runs last summer at an average of 21.03.

He took the decision to play grade cricket in Sydney in a bid to hit the ground running for a season in the championship's second tier, but has struggled Down Under, scoring just 104 runs in 10 innings.

The Canterbury-born batsman, who is out of contract at the end of this summer and yet to sign an extension, is due back in the county at the beginning of next month as Kent begin pre-season preparations with fitness work on March 11.

In contrast, Denly's county team-mate, Sam Northeast, spent the first half of the winter playing at Sydney and looked in good touch having scored 627 runs in 13 innings.

The 21-year-old, who is also yet to confirm his future once his contract expires at the end of the summer, hit five half-centuries and had a knock of 104 against Northern District to leave Australia with an impressive average of 57.

Northeast, now back in Kent, will be looking to cement his place in the middle order in championship cricket, as well as forcing his way into the Twenty20 and 40-over side.

Matt Coles, who signed a three-year contract last month, has recovered well after a slow start playing for Perth. After being relegated to playing second grade cricket, his form has picked up after recently recording figures of 5 for 16, while scores of 84 and 45 not out with the bat indicates the 20-year-old is beginning to find his feet.

Coles also returns to Kent at the beginning of March.





Pictures: ADY KERRY

AVERAGE: Joe Denly has hit just 104 runs this winter, compared to Sam Northeast's 627

WINTER AVERAGES

BATTING

	Innings	Runs	HS	100/50	Ave
Joe Denly	10	104	34	0/0	10.4
Sam Northeast	13	627	104	1/5	57.0
Matt Coles	20	279	84	0/1	16.4

BOWLING

	Overs	Maidens	Runs	Wickets	Best	Ave
Matt Coles	164.3	37	598	28	5-16	21.4
Joe Denly	85	17	279	9	3-65	31.0

Bentley asks for loan in bid to stay at Gills

Midfielder says spell away could help earn new contract

DESPITE submitting a request to leave Gillingham on loan this week, Mark Bentley is not giving up on earning a new contract at Priestfield this summer, ***writes David Pritchard***.

The midfielder is the squad's longest continuous serving player, making 191 appearances over the last five seasons, but has found first-team opportunities limited in recent months.

He has started just one game since breaking a bone in his foot in October and has been predominantly used as a late substitute. Frustrated by the lack of minutes, the 33-year-old met with Gillingham manager Andy Hessenthaler earlier this week, asking to be made available for loan.



LIMITED OPPORTUNITIES: Mark Bentley has requested to be made available for loan so he can get first-team football
Picture: ADY KERRY

The move was partly prompted by the former Gravesend & Northfleet player's concern over what happens this summer, when his contract expires. He is keen to stay on at Gillingham, but feels he must prove himself to increase his chances of earning a new deal.

Bentley said: "It's been frustrating for me the last few weeks, but for me to impress the manager I need to be match fit. I'm hoping to initially go out for a month, play four or five games and if I do well I could be knocking on the door at Gillingham again.

"I'm not stupid, I haven't done as well as I would've liked this year and that would be taken into consideration [when contracts are offered]. I certainly don't see myself away from the club, but I need an opportunity to show I'm good enough to play.

"When I sat down with the manager I made it clear it wasn't about me saying I should be playing. The boys have done well and deserve to stay in the team. No one's happier than me we're doing well because the club is close to my heart, but I have to be selfish and think about what happens to me in the summer."

Bentley is hopeful of attracting a loan offer from another club in League Two, but is prepared to drop into non-league if necessary.

Hessenthaler was not surprised by the decision, admitting he would have done the same as a player.

He said: "Mark's one of those out of contract and if he's sitting on the bench and not going to get anything at this football club then he wants to put himself in the shop window somewhere else for people to say he's available. We've made no decision on contracts yet, but he needs to play games, so we've respected that because he's a great lad."


Picture: ADY KERRY
VISIT: Senegal's Olympic committee were given a tour of Priestfield last week

Senegal delegates eyeing Priestfield as Olympics base

PRIESTFIELD is in contention to host the Senegal Olympic football team ahead of next year's London Olympics.

A delegation from the west African country's Olympic committee, headed by secretary general Seydina Omar Diagne, toured the facilities on Wednesday.

Gillingham's stadium was included in the approved training camp venues list handed out to all Olympic and Paralympic committees in 2008, but Senegal is the first country to show formal interest.

Senegal are reportedly interested in basing their Olympic team in the Medway towns ahead of the 2012 Games, but any final decision on the football squad will have to wait. It is dependent on the team coming through qualifiers, which begin next month.

County trio pick for women's academy

CRICKET: A trio of Kent cricketers have been named in the England women's academy squad for a 10-day high-performance training camp in India.

Susie Rowe, who was part of England's squad for the recent Ashes trip to Australia, is joined by team-mates Tamsin Beaumont and Deanna Cooper in the 14-strong group.

England will base themselves in Pune from April 4.

Duo hope to make Six Nations impact

RUGBY: Catherine Spencer and Rachael Burford have been named on the bench for England's critical Six Nations clash against France on Sunday.

The Kent pair will be eager to make an impact as both sides bring a 100 per cent record into the game which is likely to determine the outcome of this season's championship.

Kick-off at Worcester's Sixways Stadium is at 1.05pm.

Dover boss plays down move for McBean

DOVER Athletic manager Martin Hayes has distanced himself from a move for transfer-listed Bromley striker Warren McBean.

The Whites boss has seen the versatile Danny Kelly return to Barnet after a loan spell at Crabble, but insisted there would be no move to draft in McBean as a goalscoring replacement.

With Elliott Charles back in the Dover squad after injury, Hayes feels his three-man strikeforce is sufficient to fire the club into the Conference South play-offs.

"Warren's a good player but I couldn't guarantee him a starting place," he said. "I did speak to him in the summer, but he was offered a very good deal by Bromley. I'm happy with Donovan [Simmonds], [Adam] Birchall and Elliott as my three main strikers."

Hayes is, however, weighing up his options in midfield, with Joe Tabiri's month-long loan deal at Lewes due to expire this week. The 21-year-old, who joined Dover on a one-year contract from Barnet last summer, has impressed during his spell with the Rooks, but Hayes is in no rush to recall him.

He said: "If there isn't regular football for Joe to come back to, we could leave him there. We could get him back for the last month of the season, but it's up in the air at the moment.

"He had a break over Christmas because he had a few personal things going on and when he came back, he'd lost a bit of sharpness. He's enjoying it there, they like him and it works well for both clubs and for Joe.

"I don't have a reserve team so I've got a lot of lads kicking their heels. It's handy to have [reserve] games and sometimes it doesn't work not having them at all, but it depends who you're playing against and what the pitches are like."


Picture: SIMON HARRIS
OPTIONS: Joe Tabiri could stay at Lewes


Picture: ADY KERRY
TRIAL: Jacob Erskine

Fleet to decide over striker Erskine

EBBSFLEET United manager Liam Daish will this week decide whether to keep Jacob Erskine at Stonebridge Road after bringing the striker in on trial.

The former Gillingham player came off the bench to make his Fleet debut in Wednesday night's 3-0 win at Lewes, but Daish stressed no deal had yet been done.

Having spent months trying to bring in cover for top scorer Calum Willock, though, the Ebbsfleet boss is likely to extend Erskine's stay with the club for the immediate future.

Released by Forest Green Rovers last week, the 22-year-old was in the Bromley side that dumped the Fleet out of last season's FA Cup and he looked lively in the closing stages of Wednesday's game at the Dripping Pan.

"Jacob's in for a week for us to look at him," Daish said. "He's got a bit of presence about him, he's something a bit different to what we've got apart from Calum.

"I remember him playing for Bromley in the FA Cup and he gave [former Ebbsleet defenders] Leon Crooks and Darius Charles a torrid time.

"Nothing's clear-cut, nothing's concrete but he's given me a different option and hopefully we can sort something out."

Upon arrival at Forest Green, Erskine was loaned straight out to Swindon Supermarine, but he scored just twice in eight appearances for the Zamaretto Premier side.

For all the latest sports news, as well as match reports and reaction to the weekend's games, go to
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